Converſations

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By *Monſieur Clerombault*;

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By a Perſon of Honour.

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ENGLISH

FRENCH

CONVERSATIONS

THE PREFACE.

I Was a long time known to the Marſhal of C. without having any familiarity with him, till (being withdrawn from Court, by reaſon of ſome indiſpoſition of health) he was about ſix months at Poictiers, where he endeavoured to perfect his recovery, and divert himſelf. I was in that Country when he came thither, and ſought only to paſs my time as pleaſantly as I could. The Marſhal had ſo agreeable a Wit, that every one was pleaſed with hearing him, which made me ſee him often, and it was my happineſs to have ſome ſhare in his friendſhip. He underſtood that his Friends at Court had deſigned to get an Imployment for him, which was the more honourable, becauſe Merit was the principal thing that was looked upon in the beſtowing of it. And becauſe one could not be too careful in acquitting one's ſelf worthily in

an affair of that consequence, he often thought upon it, and considered of it, and sometimes spoke to me concerning it, under other colourable pretences. Not but that he had confidence enough in me to have discovered to me his most secret thoughts: But being yet uncertain of the issue, he was not willing that any should imagine that he was in expectation of it, lest the thing should not succeed. I partly knew his design, and he himself perceived it. Nevertheless he was willing to disguise it (for the least veil is a great help to modest persons) he made some reflection upon those that had been Conquerors, and asked me what I thought of them; and by what ways they were become such great men, whether it were their Birth or Education, or both, nay whether Fortune might not pretend to have contributed. He loved Alexander, *but admired* Cæsar; *and of two Persons who had governed in our times, well known to him, he did value the height of the one, and the Art of the other, being well pleased to discourse of eminent Persons, he freely spoke his Judgment of them, and I observed by all his discourse, that the King held the first place in his opinion. He was so charmed with this* Prince, *that he was almost transported when he spake of him, and the remembrance*

brance of his Air and good Meen gave him admiration; he told me that whoever saw him must love him; that he was the happiest birth, had the best heart in the World; that as young as he was, his knowledge in things exceeded his; and that by a natural discernment he had an aversion to feigned honesty, and could not endure base Compliance or unhandsom Railleries. This methinks should be sufficient to make a Court of worthy honest men, and to produce a happy Age. The Mareshal was a very good Judge of all this, and I knew by his countenance and manner of speaking, that he was very well perswaded of what he had said; besides, was it likely that he should disguise his thoughts to me, on design to be better received at the Court, or make any advantage by discerning of a person that goes not thither? Discoursing of these Conquerors and Heroes, and considering what it was, went to the making up of great men, or rather what might compleat an honest man (for that was what he designed) it happened that we spake almost of every thing: and as perfect honesty is made appear by our actions as well as words, we judged of both, this Converse lasted till his departure. After a certain tenderness which friendship inspires at parting, when one has

spent so many days pleasantly together (at least on my part) he conjured me to consider on our Discourse, and told me, that he had a great desire to write something of them; and that if I on my part would also do something, it would divert us at our meeting again. I writ five or six Conversations, and as I was about to proceed, I understood that his illness increased, and suddenly after I heard what befel him.

To conclude, there are some persons in the World who endeavour to inform and perfect themselves by reading, but the most part of them seek only after the pleasure of it; and I blame them not, for I am partly of that number; I should desire only that Justice might be done to every thing, and that as much may be discovered as is possible, and what we may reasonably expect on each Subject; for it cannot be imagined (be ones Art never so great) that we can extremely please when we write on those Themes which tend to instruction. In effect, to discourse a long time of Truths and of Falsities, of Good and Evil, is a kind of Entertainment which agitates the mind without moving the heart; and that which commonly pleases proceeds from the contrary; for the heart should be moved, and the mind undisturbed.

ſtumbed. Beſides, although people are not willing to be deceived, they love much leſs to be undeceived; and that (perhaps) is one of the chief reaſons why the World as yet knows ſo little, as to the benefit that may be made by reading theſe Entertainments. There are but few people who will believe that they ſtand in need of them, to render them either more knowing or able; but this is true, that the more Wit any one hath, the more he will like them, and it requires only a good ſenſe to underſtand them; Learning will help very little. It is likewiſe true, that the moſt worthy man by reflecting on them, will yet become more worthy; and that the moſt accompliſhed Lady, by imploying never ſo little time in them, will become more agreeable, and conſequently the more deſirable. It is ſo eaſie to be ſatisfied of this, that it would be great imprudence to affirm it without being certain of it. I ſometimes raiſe my Subject, and ſometimes let it fall, the better to ſhew in every thing the good and the ill; for I deſign no praiſe to my ſelf.

To conclude, I ſhould not have thought of writing theſe Converſations, if I had not believed that I ſhould do a pleaſure to that perſon, of whom I have been ſpeaking. For beſides that, I apply my ſelf to nothing, and

not aim to appear publick, I understand well enough the different opinions of the World not to deceive my self in them: the smallest number, which commonly is the best, is seldom found the strongest; and if I had followed my own humour, and undertaken to write, it should have been upon other Subjects.

THE

THE FIRST CONVERSATION.

THE Mareſhal of *C.* is a Perſon juſtly deſerving the Character of a gallant Man, who underſtands the World perfectly well. He hath ſpent his time for the moſt part either at the Court or in the Army; and there are but very few who have had a greater ſhare than he of thoſe natural parts, which renders a man both able and agreeable. Notwithſtanding his little impediment, he expreſſes himſelf gracefully; he loves rather to ſpeak than to hear others, whether it be that others ſeldom anſwer his expectation, or rather (as 'tis thought) that he takes delight to make himſelf admired. It is above two years ſince he began to be ill; all the Phyſicians who have been with him, and the Waters of *Bourbon* have not cured him: it is a diſtemper which hath not at all ſeized on his Spirits, for he never had them more lively

lively nor pure, nay nor more pleasant. He was for some time with Madam *Mareschale*, to breathe (as they say) his native Air; but it seldom happens that a Courtier, who is sick at the Court, can think himself better at his Country-house. Madam *Mareschale* was upon her return to *Paris*, and the Mareshal came to *Poictiers*, where he was six or seven months; where-ever he is, he endeavours to divert himself, and delights to please others: and as there is nothing so inconsiderable, which a great man when he undertakes it, cannot set a value upon; the Mareshal, knew so well how to improve the least occasions of pleasure, that where-ever he was, Divertisement was never wanting. One day finding himself better than he used to be, he desired the company of some Ladies at Dinner with him, which was not of those kind of Feasts, where many times there is nothing pleases but such a delicate and so well chosen an Entertainment, that there was nothing more to be desired. Ladies Meals commonly are not very long, whether it be that they love not that kind of excess, or that they distrust themselves, and think they should abate of that modesty which gains them

them a respect. As soon as they rose from Table, every one began to divide Companies, some to play, others to look on. The Mareshal, who was only a Spectator, spake according to his custom many pleasant things; but Play being imployment enough of it self, and because the Losers commonly are not in humour to be delighted with Wit, he thought it best to say little, and to avoid the occasion which tempts the most reserved. He drew the Chevalier aside, and going into another Room, You may easily believe (said he) that I am very glad to see you, but I must assure you further, that I find my self something better for seeing you: and to say truth, after having tryed so many remedies to recover me of an illness, which Melancholy would not at all lessen, I have now nothing to seek after but Mirth.

The Chevalier who studied how to divert him, asked him what he had most mind to do. I was more willing to entertain him, answered the Mareshal than play with the Ladies, we will discourse of certain things which are not commonly learned in the Commerce of the World. I never wished any thing so much as that I were a little less

ignorant,

ignorant, and when I converſe with you in particular, methinks I rid my ſelf of it without any ſtudy or inſtructions. The leaſt thing that you relate to me of *Socrates* ſinks very deep into my mind, and I hope one day I ſhall be heard to cite divine *Plato* as the Lady does who hath a good Wit, and delights very much to diſcourſe upon every thing. Wit (ſaid the Chevalier) is always acceptable, and Women alſo in my opinion cannot have too much of it; but moſt people approve not of their being ſo knowing, or at leaſt that they ſhould ſhew it; and may not this Lady you ſpeak of, be the ſame who had given you the Idea of thoſe whom you repreſented ſo pleaſantly the other day. I never ſaw any thing better imitated nor more to my liking; without doubt it is not enough to have Wit, but he muſt be an extreme well-bred man that can know how to be pleaſant after ſuch a manner. I agree with you, ſaid the Mareſhal that among perſons that know how to judge, one cannot be too well accompliſht to be as pleaſant as one would deſire, becauſe that moſt people have not a delicate taſte, nor are able to diſcern that which is beſt; it often happens that they are taken, nay even charmed with

certain

certain ridiculous parts they play to them: but well bred persons do not use such kind of Buffonnery. You know very well that there are some persons who are pleasant Company, and who notwithstanding are not beloved, and for whom few are concerned. I do not think that any one hath reason to envy such kind of persons: but those who are pleasant indeed after the best manner, never fail of gaining the heart, and 'tis in that way that I should be glad to please. One cannot shew too much Wit in a pleasant Conversation, yet one must have a care not to be too forward, as if you would appear always ready to make Jests, and speak fine things: there is something of a free easie way which cannot be expresst, that has a better effect. Neither is it good to be too reserved, nor affect singularity too much: when one is arrived to such a degree of Merit, an open and complaisant Carriage hath very great Charms to attract Love; what advantages soever any one hath, they must be pleased with others, if they would have others pleased with them. I observe that there are some Fooleries which are currant amongst some people, which do not much credit those that use

them,

them, they are rather the subject of scorn than laughter to those that rightly understand.

They are laughed at, added the Chevalier as that Queen of *Egypt* laughed at the fine words and pretty conceits of *Anthony*. How, replied the Mareshal that *Anthony* who was one of *Cæsars* Generals, who disputed the Empire with *Augustus*? Oh that pretty *Egyptian*! and what could she find in him to except against. The Chevalier then giving him to understand, that it might be something of bluntness, he being in Armor, and always dreſt Souldier-like, I see by that, answered the Mareshal, that there was in those days your Virtuoso's and nice conceited Ladies, which I thought had been an Invention of our times. You approve not then, said the Chevalier, that the Princess should be so difficult of access, or that so much Wit should be necessary to be imployed in gaining her favour; but for all that, I fancy that you have least reason of any person in the World to dislike it: for I believe it would be to your advantage, if there were such nice Genius in all Courts where you come: methinks for that only reason you should love them; for when things are spo-

ken

ken or done with an ill grace, do you not think that a little disdain or aversion shewed, becomes a Lady very well, so as it be but just enough to give one cause to guess that it is so?

I am of your Judgment, said the Mareshal, but there is a kind of an affected delicacy, which cannot allow of any thing which one is not accustomed to see, and despises rigorously every thing that is not greater or no longer in the Mode, which seems to me to proceed from a dark understanding or want of wit.

But to return to our nice Queen, was it not unreasonable in her to expect, that a man who is bred to Arms, should shew nothing of his Profession, but when he faces the Enemy? How is it possible that any one can spend his life in the Wars, and not smell a little of the Souldier? The Wars, said the Chevalier, we must grant to be the finest imployment in the World; but to take it right, a well bred man hath no Profession at all: For though he understands a thing perfectly well, and is in a manner obliged to pass his life in it, it seems to me, that neither his Actions nor his Converse should shew any signs of it, he takes too deep

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a tincture of nothing, and his Wit and good Sense teaches him how to behave himself on all occasions. What a fine Idæa you give me, cryed the Mareshal, I am much pleased with fancying to my self our young *Prince* to be of this kind of Wit: we cannot take a more noble Subject to entertain our selves withal, and you know that very few days pass wherein I speak not something of him. I remember very well where we left when we were interrupted. I was asking, whether you were not of that opinion, that it would do well for him to learn the Language of the ancient *Romans*, which is spoken by so many good men and such a number of Emperors. It is not only to be valued as good in it self (answered the Chevalier) but there is very much advantage to be made by understanding it; we find in it so many excellent things, and that in their Original: for you must needs confess, that when any one speaks, there is something so clear and natural, which proceeds from the Wit and Understanding of the person expressed in apt and significant words, which cannot by all the Art imaginable be rendred into another Language, as to be altogether the same. I find also that the Art which is used to

teach

teach that Tongue, gives a great light into all the other Languages, and that we may by knowing it, ſpeak our own the better and with more aſſurance. Beſides, being at this day the moſt known and univerſal, the Prince would be glad (eſpecially if he ſhould one day become the Arbiter of the World) to underſtand what ſo many Nations ſhould ſay to him, and to expreſs himſelf without an Interpreter.

Is it an eaſie matter (ſaid the Mareſchal) to learn it in a little time? The more neceſſary part of any Language (anſwered the Chevalier) will aſk but little time, and yet it is of great benefit when one knows it. But the Niceties which depend much on the ſkill of the Teacher, and on the perſons we hear ſpeak, are more difficult. You know, in all other things, what it is to give the laſt touch. I ſhould be of opinion (continued the Chevalier) that now in his Youth it would be beſt to divide and ſet apart his hours, for fear of oppreſſing him too much, and giving him a diſguſt of what he ſhould learn: and make him begin to practiſe ſuch little Exerciſes for the activity of his body, as his age and ſtrength permits, he would be the better ſhap't and

more healthful: that it will be good likewise to divertize his Studies and his Recreations too, as should be thought most convenient: and I believe his hours should not be too regular; for even pleasure it self, if it be offered always in so orderly a way, and at set times, becomes tiresom and looks like constraint.

I fancy now in his tender age (in which they may make what impressions they please, but not so easily blot out again hereafter) they should order it so, that those who come about him, should be of those persons who are lucky in all things, and whose demeanour and presence may not accustom him to any thing which is fit for him to forget. I would have the like regard had in chusing those Masters who come to teach him the smallest things. I know there will not want those who will say, that this is but a fancy; but I am very certain, that as for all sorts of Exercises, as well those of the body as of the mind, it were to be wished, that such as are most skilful and able to perform them best, might form in him that unexpressible gracefulness, which most Masters want themselves: and also that after some time, *Monsieur de* D. T.

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and likewise *Monsieur le* P. might discourse to him of the Wars, and shew what ways Conquerours took to be great. For I am perswaded, that of what Birth soever any one is, he may think himself much honoured to have contributed any thing to a work of so great consequence, and that all those things which a young Prince ought to learn, cannot come from a person of two good a Family.

It is said, that *Cæsar* by combating and running through all parts, from *Europe* into *Asia*, and thence into *Africa*, lost most part of his old Souldiers; and that he himself instructed new-raised men to hold the Buckler, and use the Sword, or the Javelin; Do you not think that by learning of such a Master, the instruction took much deeper impression, and spread it self further, even without being aware of it?

What is said of handsom persons (answered the Mareshal) that every thing becomes them, may be said with more reason of dexterous and judicious persons. I should have been glad to have seen that Masters of the World play the Fencing-master. Whatsoever I had observed from so great a man, would have taught me something

that I ſhould have been glad to remember. And that which you ſaid juſt now is very true, That there are ſome perſons whoſe Company we cannot too much frequent. 'Tis certain, that by ſeeing them often, on whatſoever occaſion it may be, beſides the improvement that we have by being with them, we gain a good eſteem to our ſelves; as we perfume our ſelves, unawares by walking amongſt the Jaſmins and Orange-Trees.

There cannot any thing be imagined more gallant, and truly, ſaid the Chevalier, you have a great exactneſs in ſpeaking. I know very well, ſaid the Mareſhal, when I am minded to be pleaſant: and I thought it would ſurprize you. If you did ſurprize me, ſaid the Chevalier, 'twas the better to pleaſe me. A thing that is well conceived, ought likewiſe to be well expreſſed, and I think there is nothing more pleaſant.

For all that, anſwered the Mareſhal, I am the man in the World that leaſt ſtudies thoſe kind of florid expreſſions. Neither do I much affect exactneſs in ſpeaking. To be punctual and juſt, as to the ſenſe I love always; but to be ſo in words, appears commonly

commonly too much affected: and if I did desire to be eloquent, I should wish to be so with my heart and understanding. No man wants words when he has any thing to say to the purpose.

People talk as long as they please (said the Chevalier) of what relates to the Commerce of the World: we find but too many that are skilled in that way of discourse: but for some other things which are less clear, and not easie to be conceived, one is many times puzled to express them, as one has a mind to do. 'Tis true, that a person may be said to be eloquent, who first had the conception of them, in what manner soever he makes others understand them. Those who think well are never too long nor tedious, for they seek words only to express their thoughts; whereas others study more how to speak finely, than how to express themselves.

As to exactness in speaking, I find two sorts which have always good effects: the one consists in discerning things as they are, and without confounding them: for if we fail never so little, either in speaking or acting, it is presently perceived and taken notice of: this depends upon the Wit and Understanding.

The other, juſtneſs or exactneſs of ſpeaking appears in being able to judge of the decency of our expreſſions, and in having true meaſures how far we ought to go, and when to ſtop. This which proceeds chiefly from the reliſh and judgment we have of things, ſeems to me more doubtful and difficult.

The exactneſs of words pleaſes when it is without affectation, and words are not played and gingled withal. But I can aſſure you, that one cannot have too much of that kind of juſtneſs of Speech, which conſiſts in the knowing how to make uſe of the apteſt and moſt proper words and the beſt forms of ſpeaking, to infuſe our thoughts into the minds of others in the ſame manner we deſire; neither more nor leſs.

Theſe exactneſſes are always approved of, provided we be not too ſevere and rigorous in expecting them from others; and that we remember that *Roman* Lady, before whom one might not ſo much as trip; for as ſhe was one day preſſing and playing upon an excellent man, who was ſomething intangled and out of order, he told her, ſhe was in the right, but that ſhe was a little to blame to take away the pleaſure of freedom and negligence. We

We are much more civil to Ladies now a-days, said the Mareshal, than they were in those times: and whatever they say now does not discompose any body that understands the World. They may venture at any thing, especially when they are handsom. But an accomplisht person, though of never so much merit, ought not to be too confident of himself: yea, the more he excels others, the more care he ought to take not to prescribe to the Company, but to be complying. For naturally every one is afraid of a Master-wit.

I love those persons who always shew some Wit without offending any one, and I perfectly hate those who make use of it only to the displeasing of others. It is good to avoid the converse of such, as much as one can: for this humour proceeds from the pride and maliciousness of their nature, which mingles it self in all their actions. There are others of them, who are more rash than malicious, who, to vent a Jest, will make sport with, and play upon every body, without considering the consequences. What advantage is it to have Wit, if one cannot make use of it for the gaining of the good opinion and love of the World?

One may withdraw and abſcent ones ſelf, if things go not to ones mind: but when we come into Company; we ſhould carry our ſelves ſo, that we may be acceptable to thoſe perſons with whom we are, although we have no great kindneſs for them. For thoſe who think to revenge themſelves by a croſs Carriage, do to themſelves more injury than they do to others.

I know ſome alſo who are froward and diſagreeable, out of a principle of envy. This is a fault which diſguſts me moſt of all, which diſcovers a mean Spirit and a narrow Wit. For if one well underſtood what Life and Fortune is, it would incline one rather to pity, than envy thoſe whom the World thinks happy. I have ſeen ſome obſcure perſons and of very ordinary capacities, who would equal themſelves with the chief men of the World, and who by no means would conſent to, nor allow of their reputations.

There are others who would gladly pleaſe and gain love: but neither honour, truth, nor the benefit of thoſe who hear them, can make them ſay any thing, unleſs it tends directly to their own proper advantage. 'Tis an ill way they take; for the

the World thinks not well of those who are only for themselves, but it always approves of those who endeavour to advance the reputations of those that deserve it. Sir (said the Chevalier) your Art is marvellous: For the thing that was in question, was only concerning the exactness of Language, or something like it, yet by degrees, and almost insensibly, you are fallen upon the discourse of the Commerce of the World, and you have described those persons who make ill use of their Wit; and who only speak for their own interest: which shews that you have observed the Court, and that you are not well pleased with the Principles and Manners of it.

I shall only add to that which you said just now, That when any one speaks, whatsoever design he may have, that of pleasing should always be one: but that ought not to be the sole or principal end. Nature tends only to things necessary. There is nothing in the fairest body of the World which is not necessary for life or motion. Good cheer is founded upon the necessity of eating and drinking. Lodging must be had, and that is the cause we love fine houses; for at first we only seek those things

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we cannot want: and afterwards we proceed, and desire the pleasure into the bargain (if we may be allowed to speak so) as an accidental thing which rejoyces us, thoughwe did not expect it.

I allow (said the Mareschal) that a man take the liberty to express himself, let it be in what way he pleases: and I understand you very well. I believe the best way to improve ones self and become knowing, is not to study over-much, but to entertain our selves often, and discourse of those things that open the Understanding. And it would be good (if I mistake not) to accustom our young Prince to this, and to place people about him who might instruct him in that manner. As for such Ladies as are placed about him, I do not see that there need be such care in the choice of them. I confess, I should only have a regard to those of the pleasantest humour, to keep him always chearful. For excepting a very few, (the wisest of them appear to me to have little sense) though otherwise they may please. You judge well, that from some certain agreeableness in the face or shape, we can conclude nothing concerning the Understanding. And those who

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are able to discern one from the other, are seldom deceived.

The World will not allow Women to be wise, said the Chevalier, but I know not why, unless it be perhaps, because they are commended enough for other qualities, and that they are handsom. For the World delights to lessen on one side what it is forced to allow on the other. And if it cannot deny a man to be very brave, it will never agree that he is other ways well bred, although in reality he excels most in the latter. In my opinion it is not so rare a thing to meet with Ladies of good Understanding. I find in them a delicacy of Wit which is not so common to men; and I have likewise observed in many places and amongst all sorts of Qualities, that commonly mens actions are not attended with so much gracefulness as Womens are; and that Ladies are more skilful than they in what they do: whether it be that the advantage of pleasing be more natural to them, or that they finding their greatest strength to lie there, they make it more their study from their Childhood. Two or three of them, (if I am not mistaken) have begun to undeceive the Court concerning

your

your false Gallantry, and if we thought there were no glory nor pleasure in gaining their favours, we should not study so many ways to render our selves agreeable to them. Besides, no person is ever well bred, or at least a perfect gallant man, in whose making the Ladies have not had a hand.

How much am I obliged to you (said the Mareshal) for making a difference between the well bred man and the gallant man? We are apt to mistake and confound one with the other. It seems to me (said the Chevalier) that the excellence of a Gallant consists in the common way of living; and we find in him a certain plausibleness of Carriage, which a well bred man always hath not. But a well bred man hath more solid vertues, though he be less busie and forward to shew himself in the World.

There's a great deal of difference betwixt the one and the other (said the Mareshal) This quality of a Gallant, which pleases in young people, passes away like a flower or a dream; and I have seen some of these gallant men become the neglect and scorn even of those who once admired them. But if we love a man for his good breeding and

honesty,

honesty, we always love him; and 'tis not in the power of time to make it otherwise.

I imagine, said the Chevalier, that when those gallant men were so much esteemed of, yet all the World was not so dazled with them; and that there were always some who feigned that it was but a false Gallantry, and a glittering Varnish, which might perhaps surprize. But true Gallantry amongst persons who understand it, is always well received. It depends but very little upon the advantages of the body: nay, it happens many times, that a deformed man hath a better grace than another, who seems made on purpose to be made for a Picture. It is not enough to have a fine outside to make one agreeable; that which is of greatest importance is the well regulating of our Intellectuals, and the taking care that our head and heart be in good order: for one can never be a gallant man without having a good heart and much wit.

This true Gallantry appears principally in the knowing how to set a pleasing gloss upon things that are in themselves displeasing. For many times that which disgusts us most, we should the better endure, if a

good

good colour were put upon it; and if we considered it so as to make the best of it, I remember there were two friends that went to visit a Lady, and he that was the worst received by her, imagined, that to gain her favour, there was nothing wanting but to ruine his friend in her opinion. The other, who perceived it, instead of complaining or being enraged at it; I knew very well (said he to him) that you had a love for me; but I did not believe that you thought me deserving enough to be in the favour of a Lady of such merit, and who is so good a Judge of men: these thoughts of yours are so advantagious to me, that they cannot any ways be an occasion of the breach of our friendship.

This (said the Mareshal) seems to me perfectly gallant, I know not whether something that hath been told me of a great Princess, proceeded not from a Wit of the same nature. She was informed, that a very worthy well bred man (but a little fantastical) found some fault with her Carriage: we have (said she) but two many Flatterers; that which you tell me of this Gentleman, is rather an advice than a reproach; 'tis none of his fault that I am not

better;

better; and I am much obliged to him for it.

There could not any thing have been found out more juſt (ſaid the Chevalier), and it makes me my ſelf better underſtand my own thoughts. This Princeſs muſt, without doubt, have been more than an ordinary perſon. Oh! how happy ſhould we be, if all things that paſs in the World were conſtrued after this manner. I fancy (continued the Chevalier) that a gallant man is no other than a well bred honeſt man, only a little more briſk and ſparkling than ordinary, and who has the Art to make every thing become him; however there is a great advantage to be made by knowing how to be both the one and the other, as we ſee occaſion. And I have ſeen ſome worthy good men, who have been much to ſeek amongſt Ladies, how to inſinuate themſelves into their Converſations, though they have had very rational things to ſay to them.

Rational? (cryed the Mareſhal) who could ever have it in their heads to uſe their reaſon ſo unſeaſonably? The Ladies are neither ſo coy nor ſo ſevere as to ſtand upon reaſon on ſuch occaſions; but they would

would be accosted gallantly and boldly, as you know they would have neat addresses, an airy and frolick Conversation, an agreeable compliance, with a little flattery, and that *je ne scay quoy* of smartness and wit to stir and warm them without perplexing them: that way which is now used in the most refined and civilized parts of the World which takes with every body. A confident yet a modest Carriage, which is neither mean nor sullen, having nothing which savours not of goodness and honesty.

He that knows how to perform his Courtship after this manner, may in my opinion become of great consideration amongst the Ladies; and that is the surest way to please them: but it is also the most hazardous, unless it be carried very skillfully, and with a good grace. For we must remember, that the more such kind of things are agreeable when they are well done, the more they displease when they are ill performed.

It may besides be added, said the Chevalier, that few people are born with these perfections, nor skilled in the managing of so glorious a course of life, and if it should

be

be ones fortune to ſucceed in perfection, the moſt part of Women are not much delighted with it: at leaſt 'tis certain, that ſo much ſmartneſs and frowardneſs will at length tire them.

I find that thoſe Women who have the moſt wit, like much better a little more reſervedneſs: and commonly thoſe people are unfortunately diſappointed of their aims, that do not know that they are gained by the ſame ways that we are gained; and likewiſe loſt after the ſame manner. They throw as it were their hearts at their heads, and at firſt daſh tell them more of their Love than can in any probability be true, and many times more than they deſire to hear. They give them not time ſo much as to wiſh that they were loved, and to taſte of a certain ſweetneſs which is only found in the progreſs of Love. That pleaſure muſt be long enjoyed to make Love laſt for ever: there is but little pleaſure in obtaining that which we have not very much deſired; and when we have it ſo eaſily, we accuſtom our ſelves to neglect it, and commonly come there no more. But trouble not your ſelf about Ladies for our young Prince, there will enough offer

themſelves when the time comes.

As they were ſpeaking, one came to tell them, that there was ſomething in diſpute amongſt the Ladies, who were, as I told you, at play in another Room, and they deſired them to come and give their opinion. It could not have happened more opportunely, ſaid the Mareſhal, juſt when we were ſo ſeaſonably upon the Theme of Ladies. For if we would not diſpleaſe any of them, we had need to ſummon all our wits to judge between them. Let us do the Houſe right, and we will conclude for this day. To morrow I will expect you, and give order that we may not be diſturbed.

THE

THE SECOND CONVERSATION.

THoſe who are at the Court make more Friends and Acquaintance, than thoſe who live retired. But of that number of Friends, few of them are really ſo, and for the moſt part they are as little underſtood by any of the Court, as they themſelves perfectly underſtand the Court. Not that it is ſo, as 'tis generally ſaid, That Courtiers love nothing, and that they ſtudy their own intereſt more than how to diſcern and eſteem true merit. For peoples hearts and minds are much the ſame there as in other places, and Intereſt ſways through all the World. But in that place we are divided amongſt ſo many people, that every one has but a little of us, and that ſuperficially, according as every one deſires; and commonly we fix not upon any one, either to love, or perfectly to underſtand.

The Chevalier who had ſeen the Mareſhal ſo much abroad in the World, and who knew well enough that he was a very gallant man, yet had not ſo great an opinion of him then when he ſeldom ſaw him, as now, and having frequented him ſeven or eight days in retirement, he knew not how to be abſent from him.

He therefore failed not to come the next day, as they had appointed; and being with him betimes, he engaged him to paſs the morning at play, and before they left off, he ordered it ſo, that they ſhould be obliged to ſet to it again after dinner; though it was a great delight to him to hear him diſcourſe, yet he always found ſome invention or other to hinder him from ſpeaking much. For the Mareſhal, to whom any great agitation was hurtful, was eaſily moved (and contrary to the cuſtom of other perſons that are much in the World, and who dive but little into things) is exceſſively thoughtful, and ſpeaks often with much eagerneſs, and with as much action as if he were in perfect health. They plaid only to paſs the time as one ought always with true friends; for if high play deſtroy not friendſhip, yet it may leſſen it.

After

After they had played a long time, the Mareſhal ſpake of going into a Meadow by the ſide of a little River which runneth at the foot of the Town: but the heat of the day being not yet paſt, he began to walk in the Chamber, and told the Chevalier he was thinking of that Queen of *Egypt*. As I was riſing this morning, ſaid he, I was laughing at that man that you repreſented to me, I fancied that I ſaw him with her, entertaining her with ſuch fine things, as martial men uſe to ſay to Ladies.

That which pleaſed you, ſaid the Chevalier, was, that you have no cauſe to fear if you ſhould meet with any perſons that are ſo nice and delicate. Not too much of that (ſaid the Mareſhal,) for I ſhould be apt enough to ſhew ſomething of my Profeſſion, if I had not a care. And ſome perſons have done me the favour to give me an *Item* of it; and to ſay the truth, I have but little Learning, and you cannot imagine how I am vexed at it; but I hope my Children will be more knowing than their Maſters themſelves.

Do not regret ſo much, ſaid the Chevalier, that having ſtudied ſo little, you have only loſt a little Latine by it, which they

would have taught you. That is very much (replied the Mareſhal) if there were nothing elſe: but beſides, would they not have inſtructed me in thoſe Sciences which my Friend X. eſteems ſo much.

As he was enlarging himſelf upon the diſcourſe, which he had had with that Friend; You ſpeak not like a man without Learning (ſaid the Chevalier) that which I have now heard from you, would make you be admired: and in truth, you know very much for a Souldier and a great Courtier.

The Mareſhal began to laugh, and told him, that he knew nothing of the Science but their names. The Maſters themſelves, replied the Chevalier, know but very little more. They would have taught you all that which they ordinarily teach others with much expence of time and great pains, and you ſhould not have underſtood the more, nor been more learned, unleſs perhaps by that means you might have been undeceived as to the value you ſet upon them.

What you ſay (anſwered the Mareſhal after a little conſideration) is probabilty may be true; and you make me call to mind

mind how I have ſpent whole days with this man to hear him diſcourſe of the Sciences. I confeſs freely to you, that it always happened that I could not apprehend him; the more he took pains to explain himſelf, the leſs he made himſelf underſtood. For to judge of Philoſophy by the Idea that he gave me of it, I repreſented it to my ſelf like the night, and I aſked him, whether it were eſſential to it to be dark and obſcure.

This (ſaid he) is a very fair beginning, I have known thoſe who have been longer at it, who could not have ſaid ſo much. But to diſguiſe nothing to you, all this is never well underſtood but when it is learned in our Youth.

One underſtands it not the better (ſaid the Chevalier) for being exerciſed in it in our youth, but we are leſs ſurpriſed with the obſcurity of it. Theſe people are accuſtomed from their youth to ſpeak of all things without diſcerning any thing diſtinctly. That which they ſay never ſeems obſcure nor confuſed to them, and the moſt part of them imagine, that they are very well underſtood, although it be impoſſible to know their meanings.

How comes it to pass then (said the Marshal) that we profit not by those Instructions which the Ancients have left us, and so many other great men since that time? I would tell you what I think of it, answered the Chevalier, if I were not afraid to tire you, for the Subject hath but little of divertisement in it. Besides, it seems to me, that people should do well to practise what they already know, without endeavouring either to establish it, or teach it to others: And I for my part who knows so little, have no reason to meddle in the matter.

I rested well last night (said the Marshal) and we have dined so well, that for this day all Subjects will be acceptable to me, and I defie you to weary me. Besides, there is nothing so dull, but may be made pleasant by the help of a good Wit, and I find that you have to spare.

Sir (said the Chevalier) you love to be merry. I speak of you (replied the Marshal) as I should speak to you of my self. I endeavour to shew neither vanity nor flattery; and I find the best men have but little of either, yet a little flattery may be used on some occasions, if it be done discreetly;

greetly; but vanity is always ill becoming; and I see besides, that commonly that which vain persons have most commendable in them is despised. It is good to hide it, but much better to quit ones self quite of it if one can. For if one takes never so much care not to let it appear, there comes from it insensibly I know not what which displeaseth. This defect, which I fear so much, hinders me not from telling you, that though the Intrigues of the World and some kind of Ambition have permitted me to be but little speculative; yet I love extremely to meet a certain sprightliness and vivacity diffusing it self every way with a comliness and grace.

I have been thought to have had some sparks of it; however there is nothing of all that, which people love and admire, which affects me to that point. I must open the bottom of my heart to you, I have but little reason to be fond of life, and I know how I ought to consider the World; but how much soever we are dis-engaged, those who have Children cannot but look often upon them with a concern. I have some very hopeful, and I am perswaded, that which we now discourse on, may one day

be

be useful to them. And that is it which obligeth me to speak upon so many Subjects. But to return to that which I asked you; how comes it to pass, that we draw so little advantage from the Learning which those able *Grecians* have left us?

You have often spoken to me of *Greece*, and the smallest matters that you told me of it, have much delighted me.

I should be glad that you would now again conduct me through these renowned places, and that by the way you could make me observe that which you think most considerable in them.

When he had said this, he took a seat, and caused the Chevalier to sit down, who began in this manner.

Since you will have it so, I must tell you, that *Greece* was the most pleasant abode that can be imagined. The Air of the Country is mild and serene, and so temperate, that it seldom happens that either Winter or Summer is troublesom to them. There was abundance of all things that can be desired to live happily. The men there were born very dextrous at all sorts of Exercises, and Art easily compleats that which Nature hath so well begun. The Ladies

of

of *Athens* were naturally very courtly, and rather brown than fair. There was a kind of sharpness in their Conversation which pleased. And as there often appears in a dark and still night some flushes of light, so although their manner of speaking was plain and reserved, there brake forth always a great deal of wit. 'Twas said also, that the sound of their voices was so harmonious and charming, that the hearing that alone was sufficient to delight. But besides the pureness and delicacy of this Language, how many fine things do you think was said in it. For there were many who were not contented with the graces and address of the body only, but sought after other accomplishments. No people in the World were more apt to love, nor knew how to make love better.

This Country had the proper Genius to invent Arts, and to bring them to perfection. Painting appeared there in its excellence, full of spirit and passion. There was in it always some invention which surprised and pleased much more. What has not been said of the Sacrifice of *Iphigenia*, which could not be looked on without tears? And of that Tablet of *Roxana* and

Alexander,

Alexander, where the little *Cupids* put Chains of Mirtles and Roſes about this great Conquerour, to lead him to the feet of his Priſoner? So ſtrange an adventure might at firſt hold us in admiration; but this Captive appeared with ſo ſurpriſing a Beauty, that when they conſidered her a little, they no longer wondred at her Conqueſt.

There are alſo at this day ſome of their Statues to be ſeen, which would make one fancy there were ſomething more than humane in them. This reaſon alone, if nothing elſe, methinks might excuſe the Nations of theſe times for having adored them.

They were ſo ſkillful in Muſick, that by adding and varying certain Notes, they knew how to affect the heart as they had a mind. Did you never hear how *Alexander* in the midſt of a Feaſt, when there was nothing thought of but Mirth and Jolity, was ſo charmed and tranſported with thoſe Sounds, that he ran to his Arms, as if he had ſeen the Enemy? For it was a ſort of violence and enchantment, the ſecret of which is not come to us, or at leaſt that in it, which was moſt rare is loſt.

Their

Their Eloquence needs not to be ſpoke of, it ſpeaks enough it ſelf: and who can ſo well expreſs what it was as it ſelf? And did not all thoſe fine Verſes, which appeared of their making, make the World believe that it was the Language of the Gods, and that they ſpoke it in *Greece* as it was ſpoken in Heaven? To conclude all, thoſe excellent Knowledges which have ſpread into all parts, have come from that happy Country, and even the *Romans*, who ſince that have made ſo much noiſe, have not excelled in ſo many things but by their imitating the *Grecians*, who were the firſt Inventors.

As they were a people of great reaſon, ſo it was their nature to live peaceably; but however they were very Martial. There were always of them Souldiers and Generals, who knew both how to fight and command. This *Alexander* who was inſtructed according to the Diſcipline of the *Greeks*, with a little money and but a few men, had the Courage to go and attacque the richeſt and greateſt Monarch of the Earth, and to overcome him twice in ranged Battel in the midſt of five or ſix hundred thouſand men.

This

This young Conquerour, who ran through all parts in search of Glory, had a Preceptor who thought it no less in his way; and if the Scholar rendred himself Master of the World, we may say also, that the Preceptor as well by his own ingenuity as by the favour of this Prince, had the Empire in Sciences. He had such a Wit as is requisite to make him able in that which concerned living in the World; but as to certain knowledges more hidden, he went not so far as some others who had preceded him.

Those made it their felicity to know, and said, that they knew almost nothing: they were honest men, and of a sincere faith, and treated doubtfully of doubtful things: and for such things as they could comprehend clearly, although they were of the highest speculation, they discoursed of them nevertheless in such a manner, as savoured neither of Art nor Study; but so clearly and naturally, that there needed only a good Wit to understand them at the very first.

This person who made it not so much his aim to be learned, as to gain the reputation of being so, found very well they

were

were above him, and that those who were good Judges of Wit and Learning, would never put him in the first rank. And being perswaded that a small number (that nothing could dazle nor delude) who understood to what degree things were valuable, would not be favourable to him, he applied himself to gain those who were not so clear-sighted, and to make himself admired by the multitude.

To effect this, knowing well what sort of people he had to deal with, and what would best take with them, he resolved to be positive, and to decide like a Legislator, and to insinuate to them, that they needed but only to understand him to be learned. He borrowed the inventions of those who were little known, which he used as his own, and turned all the rest into *ridicule*.

Some said, that the foundations of his Building are not very sure, and that he established Principles, which are not only obscure and doubtful, but besides so false and improbable, that a very ordinary capacity may discover the abuse. However, I could wish that a man of such Eminency had a little more naturalized the Art and

the Rules; for it seems to me, that the smallest matters which the meanest capacities comprehend when they are naturally and plainly spoken, will puzzle the most able, when delivered in an intricate method, and a studied way, which appears in all the Writings we see of his.

That which he said well, and was well understood, might perhaps be the cause of bringing an esteem upon all the rest which was not understood. For he hath written many very good things; and that which seems strange to me is, that people neglect them, because they understand them: they are of a belief, that there is nothing good which is not obscure, so that they are so far from following the light of Reason, and framing themselves according to the Principles of this learned *Greece*, that they seek nothing but false Subtilties and Chimerical distinctions. The Master teacheth a Language which he himself understands not, and which he had from another that understood it as little. Hence it comes, that a young man after ten or twelve years study knows nothing; and that those who have applied themselves all their life time to this Doctrine, are but the more ignorant.

tant. They are so much out of the way, that every one scorns to talk any more to them about it. For the but natural Wits are apt to take an ill habit by it; and being once accustomed to consider things in that manner, they never afterwards consider them as they really are. I have likewise observed, that when any of this order of men are spoke of as truly learned, able men, 'tis commonly a mistake; there is a mixture in them of Art and Fallacy together, which is very distastful.

As for *Euclide* and *Archimedes*, of whom we have formerly discoursed, those who endeavour to perfect themselves in their Science, always make some progress therein: that which it teacheth is indubitable; and would to God we could learn with the same certainty all other things that we desire to know. 'Tis good to season a mans mind with this Science, because it makes one accurate and judicious; but 'tis not good to engage ones self too far therein, in regard it withdraws people from the Converse of the World, and renders them too speculative. And to meet with that which we look for in it, and likewise to

make others comprehend it, we must proceed by long reasonings and inductions, from line to line, and from figure to figure; and when we have found it, we for the most part find too, that we might as well have been without it. Besides, that this method is not only tedious, and that it hath never been the language of any Court in the World; it seems to me, that when we say any thing that is handsom, high, or of consequence, it always carries its own light with it to make it understood, in case it be well expressed.

The Chevalier making a pause, the Marshal who had hearkned to him very attentively, asked him whether that regular Master who marched always in order at the head of the Doctors, had taught those dark and dull Sciences to that young airy Prince? There are Sciences which seem more curious than necessary (answered the Chevalier) and I do not believe, that that person who understood so well what it is that sets the excellent Princes above the ordinary ones, had much burdened him with it; he had a mind to make a Heroe of this young Prince, which in truth he did, and formed him by *Homer's* pattern.

It

It is true, that when he instructed him in those things that were of the most concernment, he was not wanting to discover to him the greatest secrets of his knowledge. That which makes me speak, it is because he published some Books of this nature, and *Alexander* writ him a Letter, wherein he shewed enough his dislike of it.

Is this Letter (said the Maretha) come down to us? I should be glad to see whether this Prince had the same Genius in these matters which made him so admired in others; and whether great men shew their greatness in their meanest actions. You may judge of the Letter (said the Chevalier) for it being not long, I remember it, and this is it word for word.

You ought not to have made publick so many excellent things which I had from you, how shall I for the future appear to have any advantage or knowledge above other men, if they know the same things which you have taught me? You did not consider, that I loved rather to surpass others in knowledge and wit, than in all things which relate to Power and Grandeur.

This was the Letter, and are you not amazed, that *Alexander* should write it in

the middle of his Glory and in the ſtrength of his Ambition? Muſt he not needs have a very vaſt mind and a wit of great extent, to be concerned for ſuch things as theſe, which Conquerours commonly make little account of?

What a man was this! (ſaid the Mareſhal) he aimed to be the firſt in every thing; and who, after all this, can think that it was Fortune alone that rendred him ſo puiſſant, and that merit had the greateſt part therein?

But to return to the Sciences; I apprehend very well, that this able Preceptor applied himſelf to that which was moſt neceſſary. It ſeems to me, that in order to become a great Prince, and to govern the World, a man cannot know too many things.

I agree with you (ſaid the Chevalier) but there is an extreme difference in being inſtructed, as an Artiſt who would excel in his Trade; and in Learning how to diſcourſe and underſtand the reaſon of any Subject which is offered, without any other deſign than to learn what it is, and not to be miſtaken. This laſt knowledge, though it be very ornamental and of great

uſe;

uſe; yet it coſts but little pains, when we meet with ſuch perſons as go directly to the point.

That which I would principally wiſh in a King is, that he ſhould have wit and be a juſt man, and every way accompliſhed: and in my judgment he cannot be too perfect in either of theſe Qualities. Beſides, 'tis true, how happy ſoever we are, or whatſoever new advantages we may have either of body or mind, we ſhould ſtrive to be able and ſkillful in affairs, and begin there, if we can; for without that the reſt ſucceeds not always well, and it oftentimes happens, that for want of ſkill, that which is beſt in us turns to our ruine. But it is not good to diſcover too much of this craft and fore-ſight; for the generality of the World affect not naturally thoſe that have ſo much of caution and prudence, but are rather moſt favourable to thoſe who put themſelves upon adventures, and expoſe all to hazard. Hence it comes, that ſo many perſons (eſpecially the Ladies) like not *Ceſar* ſo well as *Alexander*. This Talent of being able conſiſts in a certain dexterity and particular Genius, and is converſant in making a right uſe of that which is in

our power and of that which we know; but if we are ignorant, and have nothing in our power, such a kind of Genius will but little avail us. Therefore to have wherewith to imploy it, we must get our selves a Repute, and be well informed of things how they may be of use to us. Those who have this kind of wit love to make themselves valued, and to take their advantages; but they take no great pains to compleat themselves in any thing. Besides, the affairs of the World hinder them from fixing on any particular thing; nor do you find that the ablest excel in all things.

I should be of an opinion (said the Marshal) that a Prince should addict himself to History; for it discovers so many things, that one may by it render himself able and knowing, at least it is a good guide as to what concerns life. 'Tis true (said the Chevalier) History may be of great use, were it only to perswade by Examples that which we have a mind to, when we have but weak reasons to give for it, or that we cannot make good ones be hearkned to. But the events being different (although the Conjunctures are alike) it is difficult to establish any thing certainly upon it, and I believe

believe that one may be able and knowing without the help of History. When there was neither track nor mark of it, did not our Fore-fathers understand the good and the evil?

Besides, all things possible that we can imagine to our selves are as so many Histories, if not of the past or of the present, at least of the time to come: for in this infinite space of time and of the World, all that which can happen meets with its time and its place.

In the mean time, History being a kind of Experience, 'tis certain, that we may profit much by it; besides, there are some of them which come from so good hands, that though we know them, 'tis a pleasure to us to read them. Kings do well to read them, and also to inform themselves of things which pass in their own times, that they may have an eye to what may be done therein, and not lose any opportunities or advantages. 'Tis principally necessary to bring the young Prince to consider that those Kings and Emperours who have been worthy men, besides the glory which remains to them, that they led also a most happy and pleasant life.

But the best time for taking the Air is almost past, and methinks it were good to go and take two or three turns by the River side: Let us go (said the Mareshal) I had not thought of it, if you had not put me in mind.

THE

THE THIRD CONVERSATION.

THE Chevalier came in good time to the Mareſhals Lodgings, who had a mind to go forth that morning; there being neither wind nor heat, but one of thoſe pleaſant days which are not too light nor too gloomy. The Mareſhal was alone in his Chamber leaning againſt the Window which looks upon the Gardens, and ſeeing the Chevalier come in, he told him with a chearful countenance, that he took it kindly that he forſook not his Friend at a time of need, and that he had thoughts of taking the Air, it being ſuch fine Weather; and that he ſhould be glad to have ſo good Company. The Chevalier anſwered, He was very ſorry that it was no better. I doubt it not (ſaid the Mareſhal ſmiling) you are the moſt concerned in it. One ought to wiſh himſelf of an agreeable Converſation, if it were only

only to entertain himself: For a man is sometimes alone, and when he is tired with his own thoughts, he cannot be rid of them as he would. That happens to me but too often (said the Chevalier) and even at this instant that I am speaking to you, I am glad to be with you; for I find that if I were alone, I should be but little satisfied with any thing that comes into my mind. That which you tell me doth not at all please me (replied the Mareshal) for as a man always loves himself a little, so he is apt to flatter himself, and when he is not contented with his own thoughts, what likelihood is there that others should be pleased, who for the most part excuse nothing? But I will not be so nice: and walking towards the Garden, Come let us not droop (said he) speaking in a pleasant manner; for by stirring we animate our vigour and spirits.

There were in this Garden Orange-trees full of flowers, the sight and odour of which rejoyced and pleased them. They fetched some turns in the Walks, entertaining themselves on divers Subjects, and after that, being set down under the Orange-trees; Let us enjoy this retirement, said the

the Mareſhal, and taſte the ſweet repoſe which is offered us, and entertain our ſelves in freedom. Methinks, ſaid the Chevalier, that one lives more in two days of pleaſure, and are more ſenſible what life is, than in two years full of buſineſs and trouble. I find alſo that we ſee greater things in retirement, than abroad in the World, or at leaſt we conſider them better. For what do we ſee of great in the World, unleſs it be perhaps an Army, the Siege of a Town, or the Court of a Prince? We are quickly accuſtomed to them, and all this appears great to us only at the firſt ſight. But if we look upon the different works of Nature, the Sun ſetting, a fair night, and theſe Planets which ſo majeſtically rowl over our heads, we are continually admiring them. Thoſe who think only of their Fortune, are imployed about a little artificial World which they underſtand very well; but this great natural World is unknown to them.

But for all that, replied the Mareſhal, it is this little World that makes men great, or to ſpeak more properly, which makes them be known. For thoſe who are not ſo, of whatſoever merit they are, dye without

out any notice taken that they have ever lived. Besides, consider with your self, that there is such a Prince, who notwithstanding he hath been once seen, makes one desirous to see him again, and whom the most agreeable solitude cannot make one forget. That kind of life is like an Enchantment; I cannot but have an eye that way; and the young Prince being always in my thoughts, I must needs ask you whether you think he ought to be so tenderly bred, and withal what care is usually imployed for the bringing up such persons as are so dear to us?

My opinion, answered the Chevalier, as to that is, that there should be a great regard had to his constitution; but I should like it better to have it done in a manner a little more hardy, than so much of tenderness, provided that it be without any danger. We are so careful (said the Mareshal) how to secure the present, that we hazard the future. I have seen many people, who by too great a choiceness have been lost; they have been bred so, as that they could not endure any thing of inconvenience, nor the least disorder. They went to bed and rose always at a constant hour,

hour, (and you know whether the World allows any one to live after that manner) and when they had occasion to alter their course of life, they had not been two months in the Army, but they were dead or dying: Whereas others who had betimes accustomed themselves to any thing, were as well there as elsewhere, and sometimes better.

I believe, said the Chevalier, one can never break ones self of it, when one hath been delicately bred, and even the spirit and the heart may be infected by it. Also in my judgment, it were well if a Prince did know how sometimes to put off all that which we call Pomp and Magnificence: for there is nothing which is needless and superfluous, which becomes not at last necessary by accustoming ones self to it. Not that those should be hearkned to, who grumble so much against plenty and abundance, and who will not allow of gildings nor of rich Furniture? Most part of such sort of people know not what they would have, and the rest pretend to get themselves an esteem by contemning that which they have not in their power. It is well enough known, that the Carvings and fret

Works

Works so finely painted, and the Tapestries embossed with gold, can charm neither grief nor melancholy; and that one is the less subject to fumes, when one sees nothing but the greenness of the fields, and that those magnificent Beds hinder us not from thinking the nights many times very tedious. It is well enough known, that riches are of little value, and likewise that they may be hurtful: Not that the evil is in the having them, but in the thinking our selves the more worthy for them, or in being dejected when we have them not. Merit and Honesty is far above them all; and if we should come to want every thing, and be reduced to suffer much, we should not think our selves dishonoured by it, no more than if we were sick, or of a weak constitution.

You take it right, said the Marshal, and I think that by degrees there might be some little attempts made to give our Prince the knowledge, or at least the apprehension of certain things which Children use not to entertain themselves withal, and which surpasseth their ordinary capacities. For although a Child understands not at the first what is said to him in its proper

proper and full ſignification, it prepares him againſt another time; they are as little Eſſays of Reaſon, which never comes all at once.

I would not exerciſe him in imaginary Subjects nor nice Notions. For that which is ſaid, if it be unſeaſonable, or too far ſetched, affects but very little, and leaves but confuſed impreſſions. The ſmalleſt occaſion which is offered ſufficeth to ſay ſomething that bears ſome weight and pleaſeth. For I find that it is of conſequence, that they ſtudy to form his wit agreeably. The pleaſure he will take to hearken and to look upon him, will likewiſe make him deſirous to be inſtructed; and if the perſons who are about him, have a grace in their actions and their words, he will retain at leaſt the manner how he ought to behave and expreſs himſelf. If you conſider it well, this agreeable way of communicating ones ſelf to others is of no ſmall conſequence. It is very material (ſaid the Chevalier) and as you intimated before, the ſureſt way to acquire that ſo agreeable and taking a way, is to frequent the company of thoſe that have it and practiſe it. It conſiſts moſt commonly in things ſo delicate,

cate, that though we are ſenſible of them, we can ſcarce ſay what they are. You made uſe of one expreſſion, that pleaſed me infinitely to form the mind: I remember ſome that were good Maſters, who taught the Exerciſes in ſo great exactneſs, that there was nothing defective, nor ſuperfluous; no the leaſt time loſt, nor the ſmalleſt motion that was not neceſſary to action. Thoſe Maſters told me, that if once our bodies were made and formed, the reſt would not coſt much pains. So it ſeems to me, that thoſe who have thus underſtandings formed, underſtand all that is ſaid to them, and that they want after that only a body to put them in mind. When we meet with ſuch, and keep them company, we take certain opinions and certain obſervations, which we ſhould never have of our ſelves, and I ſee nothing which can contribute ſo much as that to the making of a great man.

You touch me very ſenſibly, cryed the Mareſhal, if they had in my youth diſcovered to me that which I have ſince found out by my own experience and reflections, how much time and pains had they ſaved me? one word from them to the purpoſe had

had made me comprehend a world of things, that I am ſure I know not, nor ſhall never know whilſt I live. I reflect on all thoſe opportunities which I have loſt, upon all thoſe things which I might have done, and which I was not aware of till it was too late. You cannot imagine how I blame my ſelf for thoſe many ſlips, which I had not made, if any one had lent me his hand. All the World commits faults, even the moſt able perſons, but the greateſt only are perceived.

He ſpake with ſo much earneſtneſs, that the Chevalier ſaid to him, Sir, we muſt in all things comfort our ſelves with this, that this life is not worth ſo much, that we ſhould thus trouble our ſelves in what manner we paſs it. We are ready to leave the World when we begin to underſtand it well, or at leaſt we are very far on our Journey afore we have learnt the beſt way. You have great reaſon in what you ſay (anſwered the Mareſhal) but let them not alledge, that 'tis neceſſary we muſt be of ſuch an age to underſtand to ſuch a degree, and that good ſenſe cannot come but by a long experience. A Child that hath ingenuity will comprehend all that is ſaid

to him when the right means is used, and that they accommodate themselves to his Genius.

I agree to it, said the Chevalier, but I would not over-burden him with a long chain of instruction, nor so methodical. I rather chuse to speak to him but of a few things, and let each Precept work its effect, and commend or blame him according as he should give occasion for either, and still give him a reason for all I told him, in such a manner that he might come of his own accord insensibly to make the application of it to himself. It is much better to enlighten his Understanding rather than charge his Memory. Besides, too many regular Precepts are forgotten before one can make use of them. They refer you to a time when (say they) you shall see rare things, but this time is a great while a coming.

They should so order it, that all that they say and teach to the young Prince, may render him more knowing and agreeable to day than he was yesterday, and so that you your self may be sensible of the progress he makes. Besides, it were good to accustom him to be free and affable,

ble, which are vertues that make people love great Kings. Affection produceth effects which are very peculiar to it self.

How true is that (cryed the Mareshal) and of what consequence it is for a young Prince to have the Art of making himself to be beloved? I prize it above all (answered the Chevalier) how much do you think this noble height and elevation of the mind and understanding contributes to it? You hit upon that which is of greatest importance (said the Mareshal) and for that reason so soon as he had learned that which is usually taught in his first years, I would begin to give him some new light of things, I would enlarge his knowledge, and shew him every thing. But for fear of carrying him out of the way, and of straggling into some unknown Country, I would have a great care to chuse good Guides, and the best of them should not escape me.

Children, said the Chevalier, are not ordinarily speculative, the most part of them are active, and carried away with pleasures; yet there are some that are by nature serious enough, and are capable to retire into themselves. It were to be wisht that the young Prince be neither too se-

tious nor too active. It is the eveneſt and beſt temper to partake of both, and to be able to paſs with eaſe from the one to the other. For the mind and ſpirit by continual thinking, is apt to ſink within it ſelf; and if it remain ſo any long time, it becomes ſullen and leſs proper for the World. Perpetual action without intermiſſion produceth all outward, and thoſe who continually practiſe it, make no reflexions, and never come to be eminent men.

Though we have but few moments of leiſure, we ought to ſpend them in conſidering what we intend to do; for by meditating we find out the ways to arrive to perfection; but when we believe that we have found them, it is neceſſary to put them in practice, that we may know whether they are right; for we cannot be certain or aſſured of it but by our own experience. If that which we fancy to our ſelves to be the way to ſucceed in a buſineſs, be but a meer Idæa, or ſome invention too difficult to put in practice, we need only make a tryal, and we ſhall quickly undeceive our ſelves. By that means we improve every day, and ſtill add new perfe-

ctions

ctions to that which we do best.

When I came first to the Court, said the Mareshal, every body thought that to be an accomplished man. There was nothing requisite but Dancing well, running the Ring, or something of this nature; every one chose that which he liked best, and set himself to it, as if it had been his Trade.

These sort of things add a grace to a man when he well performs them, as well as they do at all other times; I mean that the body is the freer, and not so stiff, and their skill in those Exercises is perceived, although they stand still. You know it is a great advantage to be a good Actor: Action, said the Chevalier, is a kind of expression, and as words well chosen are agreeable when they express things that please, so all which is exprest by the face or gesture of the body, is well received when it is done with a good grace. But we must not mistake, there are those that are sometimes Actors of nothing, as well as Speakers of nothing. Action hath its defects as well as the Language, and to excel in both, we must observe in all subjects that which will best please.

This Talent of being a good Actor seems to me very necessary for persons that live abroad in the World, and it is much like that which is called now adays (to speak *à la Mode*) *Having a good Air*; but it is not only in that, that the good Air appears, it hath an influence and spreads it self upon every thing, and to say in a word what it is, it consists in doing well that which we do. People confound it many times with the word *Agrément*, although there is very much difference between them. The *good Air* shews it self at the first; it is more regular and more in order. *Agrément* is more flattering and insinuating; it goes more directly to the heart, and by more secret ways: The good Air gives more admiration, and the *Agrément* more of Love. Young people who are not as yet perfect, commonly have not the good Air nor certain *Agréments* like those who are masters of it.

Some people who take pleasure to discourse, said the Marshal, (smiling) like very well such Subjects as these, to shew their Wit in, but it is not altogether so pleasant to those that hear them; but when any one understands well that which he aims

aims at, he says nothing that is impertinent, and his Reason and Learning are remarkable enough.

Now to return to our ancient Courtiers, as the most part of Exercises are only proper for a certain Age; it happens, that those who had addicted themselves only to them, when their Youth was past, they knew no longer how to imploy themselves. Therefore I would not wish any to depend principally on such Exercises: I know very well that they are not to be neglected, but there is something which is better. In effect, I have always believed that one should not so much wish for any thing as for Wit, and many times people fail of it by their own fault. And I am now more of that opinion than I was, that it is impossible not to have it, if one be brought up in the Company of some people.

At least, added the Chevalier, a late eminent Philosoper holds, that all the World naturally have very near the same capacity: and that the principal difference proceeds only from the care that is taken to form it, or else from the course and bent that people take of themselves.

I cannot altogether agree to that (said the

the Mareſhal) the advantage is to be aſcribed to a happy birth in the firſt place, and Art afterwards perfects it. As to the learning by ones ſelf, it ſeldom happens, that the mind without ſome help takes the beſt courſes to do it; and I wonder at ſome Princes who are nevertheleſs excellent men, although in their Youth they have been taught but very few things. The moſt part of thoſe who are about them fancy, that it is not good to proceed too haſtily, and that it might prejudice their health; which I ſhould like well enough, provided that there be regard had to the conſequences, and that they conſider how dangerous it may be, to accuſtom a young Prince to be without Wit. Wherefore they muſt endeavour to inſtruct him in a pleaſant way, and be always teaching him ſomething without tiring him.

But to return to thoſe Princes who are the moſt admired, and who have formed and inſtructed themſelves, I do not ſee that we can eſtabliſh any Maxims upon ſo few Examples: Neither am I of the opinion (ſaid the Chevalier) that any one ſhould relye upon it, and I believe that the ſureſt way to accompliſh ones ſelf, is to have recourſe

course to well-bred persons; as the voice improves by singing, and one learns how to order it with skill by practising under a good Master; so Wit insinuates and communicates it self insensibly amongst persons who truly have it. There is no doubt but it may be acquired, if an able man set about it.

It should therefore be my advice (continued the Chevalier) that those who have Wit, and are well-bred men, be not only well received by this Prince, but likewise that care be taken to find them out and draw them thither; for, commonly they are not Traders, nor forward to shew themselves; they know how to content themselves with their own Fortune; and besides that, they are so rarely met with, that those who understand them well need not fear to be troubled with too many of them. I do not remember that I ever in my life saw so great a number of them at one time, but I could have wished them more.

This sort of people always say something that pleaseth, and never do any thing which hath not some mark of Worth and Breeding; and by conversing with, and observing

ving them, we not only inform our selves of such things as are necessary to be known for the making of an accomplisht man, but also we learn how to apply them, and likewise so far as to know when 'tis proper and mannerly to be silent. Yet we see such persons sometimes, without taking notice of this worth in them; they put me in mind of the best Artists, who are less forward than the others, and that proceed not so much from a lazines or negligence in them, as from a certain aversion which the most part of well-bred persons have to set a value upon themselves.

When I chance to meet with any such persons, I know how to distinguish them; and though I hear very good things come from them, and they behave themselves with as much becomingnes as can be desired, I make no conclusion from thence; for many times this is but a borrowed Language and the actings of a Part; I always take notice whether there be a foundation, and whether there be nothing that contradicts. In short, I regard not so much that which appears so polite and regular, as I do certain other things which shews that the Understanding goes further, and is of a larger extent. Chil-

Children seek not always the company of Children; those who are of a bold ambitious nature love to be amongst men, especially if they be pleasant. In my opinion they should accustom the young Prince to divert himself amongst such; one cannot imagine a more sure and less painful way to render him the most accomplished Prince of the World, than the having even in his youth such Courtiers?

For as a Child without any study learneth the Tongue of those people whom he hears speak, and afterwards speaks it naturally; so he will not fail to learn insensibly the manners and actions of those who are about him, and all that he gains in that manner becomes natural to him. They should make use, as much as is possible, (answered the Marshal) of this way of instructing him; but that alone is not sufficient to teach him to speak well; for to effect that, 'tis necessary to mix a little of Art and Study. I acknowledge that (said the Chevalier) and indeed one cannot have too much of either of them; but we must make it our principal business to put into him such a kind of Wit, which I cannot express, and which neither Books nor Learned

ned men can hardly ever give him. It seems to me, that those who have it want neither Art nor Learning: and when one hath it not, however compleat one may be in any thing, there is almost always some unhappy circumstance which spoils that which one does best. It seems then, that to the compleating of an honest worthy man, there is nothing necessary but well speaking and well doing.

Speaking well is what we are discoursing of; when we have learned all the secrets of a Tongue, with such other things as are taught in relation to well speaking, all this is nothing, in truth, if we know nothing but this; for what probability is there of perswading or pleasing knowing persons, or what likelihood of getting an interest in them, unless we understand how to touch them, and can hit upon the right way to gain them? The most part of the great Masters (if you observe them) say not a word of this.

Without this knowledge (said the Mareshal) it would be difficult to succeed well, especially in the Commerce of the World, where the least failings are taken notice of. When this misfortune happens, we cannot

recover

recover our selves when we would; and I see that it is of the greatest importance to have this sort of Wit, and to understand the World very well. I believe nevertheless, that it would be very difficult to speak well upon all sorts of Subjects without either Art or Rules.

This Art (said the Chevalier) is easily learned, and is but a small matter (at least in the manner it is usually taught) the most part of those who know it, are but little the more able for it. Whether it be that the Precepts which have been given them are not very good, or that they have not been taught to make use of them as they ought. If instructions that were excellent were given, and they made practise them well as they gave them, it would without doubt be a great help to well speaking.

As for the Rules that are to be given, they must follow exactly those that are in use; the most part of those Rules regard the purity of the Language, and I find that many persons without having learned them, do notwithstanding put them in practice. There are other Rules that extend themselves further, which Reason and long Experience have made so. They are things

which

which the Masters of that Art have observed from that which has sometimes succeeded well, and for that reason they thought that they might give them for Rules; but they are very often so uncertain, that they are not to be made use of, but according as one finds or judges them to the purpose; and if any one ties himself to them, he must have a regard to time and circumstances. So that if any one by his industry or by chance should discover something that is better and more than hath hitherto been seen, he ought to make use of his own discoveries and invention.

The best Art which makes us excel in speaking, shews it self only under a natural dress and appearance, it likes plain and natural beauty; but (and though it endeavours to make its beauty and perfections to appear in their proper and best light) it contrives principally how to hide it self. Do you remember those enchanted Gardens of the Palace of *Armide*?

E quel che'l bello, e'l caro accresce à l'opre,
L'arte che tutto fà nulla si scopre.

I find that those who are the most perfect, shew

ſhew themſelves leaſt, and when things ſmell of Art and Study, we may conclude that thoſe who ſay them have but little of either, or elſe that they know not how to make uſe of them. This is the fault of people who ſpeak ſo, that they cannot be underſtood by any (though they have never ſo much Wit) unleſs they be learned: But as for thoſe who underſtand not as they ought, by reaſon of their little knowledge, or that they are not acquainted with the World, they muſt blame only themſelves for it.

But this is a great deal for one ſitting, if you have a mind to walk again, I perceive amongſt theſe Orange-trees an Alley where you will find it cool. I ſee well (ſaid the Mareſhal riſing up) that we ſhall diſcourſe no more for to day, let us fetch two or three turns, and then to Dinner; for believe me, my ſtomach begins to call: And after Dinner we will go to *M.L.G.* where we will play all day. I was ſo pleaſed with our Walk yeſterday, that I muſt carry you thither again to morrow, not to the ſame place, but on the other ſide of the River upon that riſing Hill, I will come to your Lodgings, and if you are within, we will go to the Hermitage.

THE

THE FOURTH CONVERSATION.

ACcording to his promiſe the Mareſhal came to call the Chevalier about four or five of the Clock in the Evening. It was fair Weather, but a little hot, according to the ſeaſon; they quickly came to the Hermitage, which is but half a mile from the Town. There is a Cell and a Chappel with a Garden to it, they could not get in, becauſe that no Hermite lived there, and the two Religious men which were uſed to be there were gone forth that day, the Mareſhal and the Chevalier went down a little further into the Wood, where the Trees a little further were very thick and tufted. Under this thickneſs (which the Sun could not penetrate) they walked upon the Turf, as in a Meadow where the graſs begins but juſt to peep forth.

After they had walked a while, they ſtayed

ſtayed and ſate down under an old Oak extremely thick, And what ſhall we ſay, cryed the Mareſhal, or rather what ſhall we not ſay, I have ſpent the night at play where you left me, ſaid the Chevalier, and that hath made me very dull. I did not perceive it, ſaid the Mareſhal, though we diſcourſed by the way. The Coach kept me ſtirring, ſaid the Chevalier, now I am at quiet, the freſhneſs of this Wood makes me drowſie: I am ſometimes as you are now, anſwered the Mareſhal, and when I am in that condition, methinks I feel a certain ſweetneſs, which is found between ſleeping and waking, and I think of nothing, only I am ſenſibly much pleaſed; but commonly I put it by, that I may be good Company, and beſides one ſleeps the better for it at night.

You told me as you were coming along, continued the Mareſhal, that thoſe perſons who expreſs themſelves beſt, uſe repetitions oftner than others, and yet it is thought a defect in them. Is there not ſomething of contradiction in that? I remember it, ſaid the Chevalier, and I do not think my ſelf miſtaken in it, that is, becauſe people who ſpeak well, make uſe at firſt of the

best words and Phrases to expres their thoughts, and when there is occasion to touch again upon the same things (as it often happens) although they know very well that Variety pleaseth, yet it is troublesom to them to quit the best expression to make use of a worse: whereas those who are not so curious, make use of the first that presents it self; so that Chance gives a Variety to their Language. And because we are quickly tired with one manner of speaking (although it be the exactest) to make that which it signifies to be understood, we are apt to think it some defect, and those who speak purely, are more subject to it than the others; for there is a good pedevil in all things, and so there is in Language, which in some kind cannot be too pure, but diversity is less tiresom, and the meanest word can find a fit place, our Tongue abounds not so much in words, that we need to reject it.

Some Ladies who have an admirable Wit, and who ought to make use of it, to do Justice to every thing, condemn some very good words, which 'tis almost impossible to be without. Those persons are they who use them too often, and common-

ly to little purpoſe, that have given them this averſion; but though we muſt ſubmit to the Judgment, and likewiſe to the averſion of thoſe Ladies, yet for all that, I think it were not amiſs to appeal ſometimes to ſo many excellent men, who judge ſoundly and without caprice, and who have had meetings ſo long to decide concerning Language. I think it ſo, ſaid the Mareſhal, and it is not a buſineſs to be neglected; for the ſweeteſt moments of our life paſs in entertaining one another, and very few things are done without ſpeaking; and I find by experience, that it is a great advantage to ſucceed in it. But that on, which appears to me of the greateſt importance is, that occaſions are offered, wherein we have need of ſkill and wit to gain people, and to make them underſtand that one is in the right; people content themſelves with the being able to acquit themſelves tolerably well in this, which I have been ſpeaking of; and the moſt part of them are perſwaded, that if they can do a thing well, it is no hard matter to do it a little better, whereas in truth therein conſiſts that which we call Perfection, and is the only difference between excellent

Work-men and ordinary.

You have quite awakened me, said the Chevalier, with this word, *a little better*, which appears to me very difficult; but how happy is one that is able to attain to it! And I am of your Judgment, that it cannot be too much endeavoured in Converſation, it is the ſureſt means to make our ſelves to be beloved; beſides, I find that when we pleaſe other perſons well, we are likewiſe the better pleaſed with our ſelves, and thereon depends the greateſt happineſs of our life.

As to thoſe opportunities and occaſions, of which you ſpeak, wherein thoſe who are the ſkilfulleſt for the moſt part carry it, I am of opinion, that the beſt words and ways we can invent to perſwade are not good, but ſo far only as they are decent and honeſt, and that we ſhould not deſire to overcome like barbarous Princes on any terms, but like the Heroes in ſuch a manner as may pleaſe even the vanquiſhed themſelves.

I find nothing ſo commendable, as to have an upright and ſincere heart; that ſeems to be the foundation of Wiſdom, or at leaſt all wicked people are by me ſuſpected

pected of folly. It is impoſſible to have a noble and well framed mind, but it muſt be ſomewhat acroſs and contrary to the intereſt of the World; and even in the tranſports of the moſt violent paſſions, ſuch perſons will through them diſcern that which is moſt honeſt, and love it beſt.

Thoſe who have an upright heart, their Judgment, how ſmall ſoever, will be the ſame; and obſerve always, that thoſe people who have ſo many turnings and doubles in their heart, never have a right Underſtanding: there is always ſome counterfeit light which gives them falſe appearances, and then their artifices and craft ſhew that they have not parts enough to effect their deſigns by fair and honeſt ways, the way that pleaſes worthy perſons, is that of freedom and plain dealing.

What a Gracefulneſs ſo clear a Source gives to all the actions of our lives! how it beautifies our words and thoughts! and how aimable a thing it is to ſpeak well, when ſo much ſincerity goes along with it! One may not perhaps be happy in all things in following this Maxime (neither are thoſe ſo who are biaſſed to their own intereſt) at the leaſt one is ſure to gain

the esteem and affection of those who understand true merit, and what can one desire more?

As the Chevalier was speaking, he took notice that the Marshal wholly gave himself up to hearken to him, & fearing lest so much attention might be hurtful to him, he endeavoured to divert him by some pleasant digression. The Mareshal, who perceived it, I see very well, said he, that you are willing to favour my health, but you take not the right way. Every one must be dealt with according to that spirit that is in them: you must accommodate your self to every palate; that which is a diversion to most people, is tedious to me, sense and reason never tire me: those things more especially which may make me more honest and accomplished, always please me. Well then, let us continue, said the Chevalier, one would not have thought you so serious.

Amongst persons of rare merit, of whom I have some Idea; I see some of them who behave themselves so nobly in every thing, that they undertake they cannot be thought on without admiration, and I take notice also of others who speak in so sub-

lime

lime a manner, that it is very hard to attain to it; however one should strive to equal them both in the one and the other, and if it be possible to surpass them: for be it in acting or in speaking, there is nothing which is not of this value, that deserves to be loved and admired. When the heart and brain are full of these thoughts, and people accustomed to them from their infancy, from thence we may justly expect something very rare and exquisite to be produced.

We need not trouble our selves whether all necessary consequences are made good. It imports not much whether one be at the first so equal or so regular, provided that the manner be so fair and noble, that those who consider it, cannot say how one may go; with a little care and time one arrives at perfection, and it seems, that Fortune her self takes delight to compleat any thing which is well begun. I know some who speak well, and commit none of those we call faults, but it is always in the same tone: we know what we are to expect from them; and in my judgment there is nothing we should so much endeavour to avoid, as the not having something extra-

ordinary in our discourse. It may so happen, that 'tis for want of a good occasion that we say nothing that is excellent, and the subject may not permit it. Yet for all this there is no subject so untoward, which may not be turned to some pleasant sense by those who know how to make good use of their Wit. For that which for the most part seems difficult to me, and even impossible, is not so much in it self, as because of our little skill and invention; for people might do many things that would cause astonishment, if they had industry enough to discover the ways of doing it; and 'tis certain, that there are such ways, though they are not always found out.

While people are young, they cannot judge rightly of any thing, and if it comes to pass, that either by experience, reflections, or the meeting with some intelligent persons, they come to be of another mind, they despise that which they once so much admired, and many times they laugh at themselves, when they examine themselves without flattery. But if any one knew the just value of every thing aright, do you not think that he would divert himself, and make good sport with those people

that

that are cryed up, at least with those that presume, and have a great opinion of themselves? As for the rest who satisfie themselves with small matters, and have humble thoughts of themselves, one cannot laugh at them, although they do amiss, because they know that all the World is capable of committing the like errours, and they act upon that Maxime.

And so, though we have but a glimpse, or do but fancy something better than that which we speak, yet we must have a little confidence to express it well and with a good grace. But nothing is so great a hindrance to the attaining perfection, as the belief that one hath already found it.

It comes into my mind (said the Mareschal smiling) that the more perfect one is, the more this that we say may be useful, and that our entertainments are almost like (if the comparison offends you not) the Commentaries of *Cæsar*, by which no body could much profit, unless he were a great Souldier before. For we touch by the by only on that which offers it self as necessary for the making of a worthy honest man. What we say concerns those only who are animated with such a kind of Spirit as we

are; as for the rest, they will never go very far. But do you think that this Spirit may be acquired? If you judge it may, how would you begin to infuse it into Children? for one must not pretend to begin with them so high at the first.

It were to be wished, that those who educate Children, said the Chevalier, would endeavour to make them love or hate that which deserves the one or the other, I mean as much as Childhood will permit, and to order it so, that they may have a good taste or discernment. For to express my self well, I must make use of this word, which so many people abuse; a good taste would make him understand what he ought to desire to learn, and the means to be excellent in it. For if he had before-hand a right apprehension of good and of evil, the very course of things would instruct him without a Governour, and likewise the aversion to that which is evil, whenever he saw it, would be a sufficient lesson to him to avoid it.

One cannot have too curious a taste to discern between true and false pleasures, and not be deceived in what pleases or displeases. That which I mean by it is, not

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to diſreliſh every thing like a ſick perſon, but to be able to judge well of any thing that preſents it ſelf, I know not by what a kind of apprehenſion (which I cannot expreſs) which works quicker, and is ſometimes more in the right, than reflections are; but for all that we muſt not reject too ſeverely that which is diſpleaſing, or be too buſie with our reproofs. The moſt agreeable way of inſtructing and reforming others, is to endeavour to do that well our ſelves, which we ſee them do ill, by which means we make our life the more eaſie. Beſides, I would have it ſo ordered, that a young mans wit and heart be diſpoſed as it ought to be. Wit finds out the means to attain to perfection, and the heart is neceſſary to put in practice that which we judge to be beſt; for honeſty is not a meer ſpeculation, 'tis fit it ſhould be active and govern.

We ſee many Children, ſaid the Mareſhal, who are not without ſome prudence and a fore-ſight of what may be either hurtful or beneficial to them; but that which is called the having a good taſte (for I dare uſe this word as well as you all the elegant ways of ſpeaking, when

of they

they are not affected, and are well applied, are becoming enough) I say, that which I called the having a good taste, must not be expected from young people, unless they are born with a much more than an ordinary Genius, or that there hath been a great care had in their Education. I do not know whence that proceeds, unless it be, that by a natural instinct, they take at first to that which appears to them the most necessary, and that the rest affects them but very little.

This is an excellent reason which you give, said the Chevalier, and I look upon it as a hard matter for one that is young not to be transported with that which sparkles, and makes the best shew, there should be as much care as could be taken to undeceive Children, because that it is natural to them as well as to the people in general to love Shows; and even these who are born Princes, they are inclined naturally to delight in Stage-plays and publick Spectacles. But those that are perfect, and that have a good judgment, regard not things of shew, when they are but of little worth; those which are but of little lustre and great prize, please them. That is

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to be taken notice of in all things, even in our thoughts and understandings; for if those sorts of things seem very fine, they are so only in appearance, and presently disliked; those that are so in reality, without appearance, the more they are considered, the better they are liked: the reason is, because they are fair of themselves, without any helps or ornaments, and that still we discover some new and secret graces in them, which were not at the first perceived.

How comes it to pass, said the Mareshal, that some people who express themselves well upon some certain Subjects, differ so much from themselves, when they undertake to discourse of other things? and do not admire you that that man (whom we have both known, and who had so much Wit) hath left behind him such ill Love-Letters, he who writ such good ones on other Subjects? How could that be? was it not still one and the same Genius? It is indeed the same Genius, answered the Chevalier, but the most accomplished in the World is not able alike in all things, and diversity of Subjects cause him to produce very different effects.

Besides,

Besides, to do a thing well, it is not enough to know the manner of doing it, but we must take delight in it, and not be tired with it. We find that commonly good Masters speak well of that which relates to their own Trade, and I fancy to my self, that this man's Trade was not making of Love, or at least that he never well understood what it was. It cannot be said to be want of Wit, if his Letters concerning Love are not as his others so well esteemed, for there is in some of them more than enough; but the Wit was ill imployed, when his business was to touch the heart, he was thinking how to refine things, and shew his witty conceits. He writ to a Lady, with whom he was passionately in Love, that his Soul was so weak that it had not strength enough to go quite out of his Body, that was the reason only which kept a little life in him. To another, that the only thing that hindred him from dying was, that he should have some pleasure in it, and that he resolve he would not receive any in her absence.

He took these inventions from the *Spaniards*, and I make no doubt but they are good Models; but he made use of them unseason-

unseasonably. For this gallant and frolick manner of wooing, which might be well received at the beginning of an Amour, was not seasonable in the height of the fit, at which time people seldom use to droll and jest. Besides, when he speaks seriously he makes it his business chiefly to perswade her of his Love, and that the quickest and best way to succeed is not to be so forward to declare one's Love. It were much more to the purpose for him to find out a way how to render his affection agreeable and acceptable to her. For a handsom Woman easily believes that she doth not displease, and I think she is in the right, so that to tell her she is handsom, and that we love her, need be the least part of our care; she desires not always to be loved, and the most important thing consists in the ordering of it; so that if you did love her, she might be very glad of it; we ought at least to begin there. I find he very punctually examines all that passed in his heart, and to speak my judgment, he should remember that it is not the nature of violent passions to reflect upon themselves. A man that is transported with anger, doth not think that he is in such a fury, and one that is confounded

with

with Love perceives not that he is so, or at least if he do take notice of it, he considers himself no otherwise than in a natural estate, which he believes can never alter. I take notice also, that he doth so exaggerate his grief and despair, that one may easily perceive that 'tis all false. It were much better to say less of it, and leave them the more to think. Besides, Love should be discerned a good while by the person beloved, without her being told of it, and above all, care must be taken not to make any complaints that savours of Artifice, or that may give any distrust of what we say. That Adventure of *Astrea* and her Lover, who threw himself into the River *Lignon*, is easie and natural: They used no such high strains one to the other; their affection appeared not so much in their words, but all that was observed in them discovered it, and there never was any thing seen more tender and more affecting.

Besides it seems to me, that there is no Subject that can less allow of false Ornaments; and that that person whom we mentioned, had sometimes (contrary to his custom) made use of some when he writ his

his Love-Letters; but that which was most displeasing in him, was his too open and plain proceeding in that affair. The fair Goddess (said an ancient *Greek*) doth not think well nor approve of any that speak so openly of her Mysteries; and any one without being told it, may see that the veiling of them hath a good effect, and the expressions thereof cannot be too delicate and obscure: witness this Verse,

Ten connois de plus miserables?

I find notwithstanding, said the Marshal, that this person hath done something that is admirable in this kind, which agrees but ill with what you believe of him, that he was not most knowing in these matters. Can there be any thing more in perfection than that which is spoken to his Heroine? The praise of that, said the Chevalier, is not wholly due to him: A Lady who gave him the design and the invention, ought to have the greatest share of it. It is the same Lady whom he hath so well represented under the name of *Zelinde*. The work was for some time in her hands afore any had seen it; that which hath so much

charmed you comes from her, and you knowing her cannot wonder at it. You tell me a great deal of News, said the Marshal, and perhaps you think that you have fully satisfied me; but I have still one question more to ask you.

What is it that they mean by that high Eloquence which doth what it pleases, as so many people say? I have asked some concerning it, who have bragged that they understood what it was, but never any one as yet could make me comprehend it. That which you ask me, said the Chevalier, is so little understood in the World, that even the word Eloquence might be ill received: For it seems to me, that it is seldom used but to play upon those who are less pleased with good sense than with a fine fantastical way of speaking.

It may be made use of in Raillery, said the Marshal, but it would shew too much of niceness, and indeed of ignorance, to reject it altogether. Besides, at the Court they seldom speak of other things than what they see there, and those kind of things in which every one easily interests himself and understands, makes that which is said seem agreeable. But in such retired

places

places as these, if we did not entertain our selves on certain Subjects, which the Court trouble not themselves withal, we should spend our time but unpleasantly.

I agree to it, said the Chevalier, and that which you aim at deserves very well to be examined; but the most part of those things which are considered rather by apprehension than by reason, are always something doubtful, and this same is of that number, and so are all those that concern the Graces, and likewise the Beauty, although the cause of this latter is less hidden than that of the Graces. If there were a dispute concerning two handsom Women which of them was the most agreeable and fairest, it would be hard to decide it, or at least to make it so cleary appear, that all people in the World should agree to it. One might say on such an occasion, such a thing causes such an effect in me; but I know not what others think of it. I take this to serve as an excuse to my self, if I am singular in my opinion.

I do not think this high Eloquence to be so as it is imagined. People will have that it ought to amaze, and that it must be always a high strain. And as they are of opi-

nion, that a plain and familiar ſtyle is low and mean; ſo they believe that others cannot appear naturally. If it ſhould be ſo too, 'tis becauſe they have more regard to the Ornament than to the Excellency of the thing, and they do not conſider that they ſhould judge of it, as they do of gold, which is eſteemed according to its refinedneſs and purity.

I ſhould be of a quite contrary Judgment to thoſe who will have it always ſtorming and thundering; and I think that it naturally loves to ſhew it ſelf without trouble and noiſe.

As it is the fineſt and moſt noble, it is alſo the moſt difficult and leaſt common, it proceeds from a juſt and ſubtil diſcernment, but ſo high and of ſo large an extent, that there is nothing can be found above or beyond his. It is a fire pure and quick, and there are diſcovered by chance ſome glances of it, even in the moſt careleſs and ordinary Converſations. Although it addreſſes it ſelf principally to the mind, and ſeems to make the gaining of that its only aim, yet it never fails to reach the heart. If any one indeed have a mind to perplex and put the Soul in diſorder, they

must take another way more ſenſible, and a more lively tone; but this high Eloquence is not found but in the loftineſs of high conceptions. Thoſe who underſtand it only as that which is called a fine Style, do not take notice (if I miſtake not) of that which it hath moſt exquiſite in it. Alſo in my judgment there muſt be a great ſtock of Beauty to ſupport great Ornaments, and it ſeldom happens, that people conceive things that require ſuch a magnificent way of expreſſing them. That which I have ſaid is a little intricate, and may not perhaps be well underſtood, peradventure it may be better apprehended in a more familiar and known Subject.

When Ladies have a mind to appear, as it were to vie with others in a great Aſſembly, you know they adorn themſelves to pleaſe rather than to dazle the ſight: to ſome the richeſt attire is moſt becoming, and to others the moſt modeſt; and commonly they avoid extremities, they ſtrive not to be too dull nor too glittering; we ſcarce ſee two in the ſame dreſs, and this variety is that which embelliſheth the Scene.

Since I am fallen upon this, I find that

the Eloquence which conceives well, and expreſſeth it ſelf ill, is much like a handſom Woman ill dreſſed, or in a careleſs habit; and that that which makes it ſelf not much to be conſidered as to Wit, but is very ready and dexterous as to the Language, may reſemble a Woman paſſably handſom, but very exactly dreſt and ſet out, who for all her great care charms no body. But if wit and a ready clear expreſſion meddle, that is Beauty it ſelf, whereto nothing is wanting, and which pleaſeth in perfection.

I am very much ſatisfied with the Idea that you give me of it, ſaid the Mareſhal, and I conclude thereupon, that to expreſs ones ſelf well, one muſt endeavour to find out that in a Subject which is beſt and moſt agreeable; but not ſtrive ſo much to give a luſtre to the things that one ſays, as to place them in ſuch a manner which is moſt proper and beſt becomes them.

I would not be too florid in the beginning; it is a thing much to be wiſhed, that all that one ſays be good and fine, according as the Subject merits: but we muſt proceed by degrees; Nature is in that as in all other things, a very knowing Miſtreſs.

Conſider

Consider how she proceeds insensibly, the fairest day when it begins first to break and appear, hath so little light, that it is hardly discernable whether it be day or night. I discover all my thoughts to you, and if I am deceived, or take one thing for another, I hope you will take notice of it to me.

In my mind nothing is so great a sign, that the way of speaking is noble, as when it leaves some certain things to be apprehended without speaking them: the expression is clear enough, if one understands all that another says, although we do not at the first understand all that he thinks, or that his sense extends it self beyond his words.

People many times seek out so many subtilties, and refine so upon a Subject, that that which was at first well said, becomes at last not so; when we have hit the point right, 'tis good to know when to give over, and to proceed to other matters: I would likewise give them another face and turn, because diversity seems not tedious.

The person that speaks should accommodate himself to the Understanding of

those who hear him. The more Wit one has, the more he ought to be careful of it. Many times by thinking and speaking things which few people have been used to hear, though they are expressed very clearly, they may be carried so high, that their heads may be giddy and turn round. Nevertheless this defect should have its due, and I find it so seldom, that I meet with none that do complain of it, nor who are not glad of it; and at the worst we may easily help it and break our selves of it.

As to those they call Jests or Sayings, I should think that they depend not less upon the subject, nay even upon chance, than upon the understanding and wit; and that we must watch our time to bring them out. There is no great need of them, I think, and it is enough, if one speaks like a well-bred honest man. That which is just and proper upon every occasion that is offered, 'tis better far than fine conceits; yet for all that they are much liked, and I should not wonder at it, if in effect they be good conceits; but I admire that Equivocations, which have only the appearance of them, have brought people of very ordinary wits into credit.

They

They affect to speak Equivocations and Allusions now adays, as heretofore they did to make Portraictures and Characters. For there is always, you know, some false Agréments wherewith the World is abused.

I think, said the Chevalier, this to be a very ill invention: for to make ones self be heard with pleasure, one must say such things as others will be glad to hear, and say them pleasantly. I fancy that those makers of Characters and Portraictures did neither of these. For the most part of those whom they represented so curiously, there was so little likeness, that the persons could not be known. And besides their manner and way of portraicting was not very good; for to make people believe what they take notice of to be most rare or singular in them (whether it be that they would commend or lessen them) there is a more noble and sure way than to draw as they do, even to the smallest Lines.

Excellent Painters never draw all; they always allow something for you to exercise your imagination on, and still leave them more to find out than they discover. That famous *Greek* so celebrated for his

Wit

Wit and Inventing, did not ſpend much of his time in deſcribing *Helena*. He ſaid not ſcarce any thing of her Face, nor of her Stature, and yet for all that he hath perſwaded all the World, that ſhe was the beautifulleſt Woman that ever was ſeen.

Taſſo, who on other Subjects touched like a Maſter, ſhould have done well to have imitated him, and when he ſpeaks of the Arrival of *Armide* into the Camp of the Chriſtians, if he had contented himſelf with ſaying in two or three words, that as ſoon as ſhe appeared, and that they had heard her ſpeak, they had a mind to forſake all to follow her, and that even the General who ought to have been more reſerved, and leſs ſenſible, was tempted by her, we ſhould then without doubt, have thought her more amiable. All that he heaps together of the Charms of Nature and of Art, gives us not ſo fair an Idea, as that which one might form to ones ſelf, and one never fails in doing it.

The graces appear but very rarely, and even when they are ſeen they will not be conſidered full-fac'd nor uncovered, it is hard to draw them well; and if one ſhould compaſs it, every one looking upon them

with

with different eyes, the Picture would never please every body.

But the Sun is setting, and is it not time, think you to retire? Let us go, said the Mareshal, and if you think it convenient we will walk a while for a little more Exercise.

THE

THE FIFTH CONVERSATION.

THE Mareſhal received Letters often from *Paris* and from the Court, and writ thither as often to keep up the Commerce, ſhewed the Chevalier ſometimes what he had written. I cannot underſtand why people thought he was not an extraordinary perſon in that way as he was in ſpeaking. It ſeems to me, that what he writes ſhews much of a worthy well-bred man, and there is always wit in it.

It is true, that there is not ſo much order and placing of words required in Converſation, which very few mind in ſpeaking. I believe nevertheleſs, that if people did obſerve it, ſo that it ſeemed neither ſtrained nor affected, they would ſpeak much better. However, if the things that are ſaid are good ſeverally, and that there be a grace in ſpeaking them, they are well received.

But

But commonly that which is written must have a connexion, and it must be so ordered, that there may be no appearance that any pains was taken in observing it. And if any one pretend to do something worth the being read; it is not enough that each piece please in it self, but they must be made the one to fit and agree with the other, and they must be proportionate.

It is taken notice of the Mareshal, that he loves always to be sprightly and full of fire; and though he chiefly studies to please those who understand and judge best, yet he neglects not the esteem of others. In that he resembles those Ladies, who cannot endure any one should escape them: Setting aside certain History, some few Relations, and a small number of Books which he hath read, he is only well versed in the World, yet for all that he understands every thing. It happens also very often, that he improves and carries things further, which he hath but newly learned. What would a young man of such parts as his come to, if he were educated by good Masters?

The Chevalier came to his house the next day from a Conversation that he had been at. The Mareshal was retired into his

his Chamber after he rose from the Table, and seeing the Chevalier come in, I have very much wished for you, said he to him, to assist me against five or six very Learned men, who would be good company enough if they had but common sense. Before we sate down to Dinner, I set them disputing, and I spoke in my turn; but when I thought I should triumph most, there were two of them (if I am not mistaken) who whispered to each other, that they could not apprehend what it was that was thought so rare in me. They make me call to mind, said the Chevalier, a very able man, that I knew that had read over all *Tasso* with very much attention, without finding in it either Wit, or any thing to please him.

One never informs ones self by those sort of people, said the Mareshal, they never apprehend aright those things that are said to them: where there is least sense, there is enough for them, and any thing that is proposed, although never so clear, seems obscure to them. Besides, they have a Language apart, which I understand not, and which would be very ill received in the World. And it so happens, that instead of coming to the knot of the business, they

they divide that which you ask them into so many parts, that the one puts the other out of ones mind; so that one remembers no longer what it was. It much delights me to see how they range in such great order in things that are of so little consequence. Any one that hath a just Wit and a true Judgment, pursues closely that which they hear spoken, or what they speak themselves, without varying it into so many forms and figures. I am pleased that every one in Conversation should seek an agreeable diversity and some little digressions, and that they by degrees should sometimes raise themselves, if the occasion permits. Though one wanders and soars a little too high, one may well enough recover ones self: and if my Judgment may be allowed, one ought to go whithersoever ones Genius leads, without any other division or distinction than that of good sense; at least this manner is more conformable to our apprehension and thoughts, than that so regular Method of some people, who disguise every thing. There is nothing in that which is natural, nor for the most part which is real; therefore when they breed up Children, I know not why

they should accustom them to such impertinent constrained Rules, which afterwards they cannot practise without rendring themselves ridiculous?

Study may hinder, said the Chevalier, at least we must not pretend that it will infallibly make Master-pieces. Not the World neither, said the Marechal, doth not do it always, especially of those people who are bred only in the Army; who commonly are not of a very pleasing Conversation; but in recompence of that they are said to have gained Reputation and Honour, as if that would excuse their wants in every thing else: we may between our selves say, that nothing is so great a dishonour as to be disagreeable and morose. It is something like certain Women that pretend to Vertue, who value themselves much upon their being coy and fierce; for, to prize so small a matter so much, makes me think that all is but counterfeit and affected, and that they are easier won upon, than those who observe good Manners and Breeding, and are as affable as these are severe. The first seems to me to desire to be thought what she is not by some people which she likes not, and with

whom

whom she does not desire to ingage; the other is satisfied that she knows her self honest.

When we judge sincerely, said the Chevalier, there is scarce any thing to be found that is perfect: but the more exquisite discernment one hath, the more it is for ones honour to be indulgent, and we must not expect to meet with people as one would have them; but we should endeavour to make them such, and especially if we love them, and are obliged to pass our time with them. As for others that one sees but by chance, they are not to be ordered as we will; they can only be a little improved by telling them such things as are judged most proper; and if they are capable of profiting by them, that will at the least dispose them to compleat themselves.

As soon as I begin to speak, said the Mareshal, you understand me better than I understand my self, and whatsoever you tell me appears to me so easie to comprehend, that I think many times I knew it before you told it. I am continually thinking of my Children, who cannot as yet be without me, and I love them the better

for it; and though Wealth be something, yet I wish them nothing so much as I do Parts. We discourse sometimes of that which we think best for the educating of a young Prince, and by this Model, as near as it is fit for us to come to it, in my judgment we might breed our Children. For I imagine that is one and the same vertue that knows how to command, if Fortune pleases, and how to obey, when ones duty obligeth one to it. And being sate down with the Chevalier: You said (continued he) that Study might hinder; I would gladly inform my self in what manner it should be used, for I do not believe that you are of the opinion to renounce it absolutely.

That would be (said the Chevalier) a very fantastical opinion, indeed the best natural parts of the World would be but of little value, if there were not care taken to improve and bring them to perfection. One can never take any thing aright without having learned it; and who can believe, that either to do a thing well that one doth ill, or to do it better, if one doth it well, that Study can ever hinder? that is to say, to seek out the means, and that under

under the best Masters; for so it is that one ought to study.

It is seen by all sorts of Exercises, how much Art and good Masters are necessary, and it were very strange, that the body should be capable of instruction, and that the mind should not be so to. For what likelihood is there, that if Practice and good Masters are without peradventure effectual for the making people skillful in riding the great Horse, that to the making of an accomplisht person, they should both of them be altogether needless and hurtful?

The body and the mind are seldom as one could wish; but the defects of the body seem to me more difficult to be corrected: the mind is naturally supple, and it may be redressed, provided a right course be taken. And who can doubt, that if there be any one as exact in breeding Youth, as it is said, *Pignatel* was good at Horsmanship, but that he might make an accomplisht man, as well as *Pignatel* made a good Horse-man? How comes it about then, that it many times falls out otherwise? The truth is, that when one learns to do a thing of an ill Master, one learns to do it ill; and it is much more difficult to

chuſe good Maſters for the framing of the mind, than for the body. For the advantages of the body are much more remarkable and more known than thoſe of the mind. And beſides, many people who are capable of inſtructing the mind, will not always meddle in it; for in truth, as the World judges of it, there would be but very little honour gained by undertaking the Trade, although they did acquit themſelves of it in perfection.

It is certain, that to be able, well bred, and agreeable to ſuch a degree as one would wiſh a great Prince, one cannot know too many things, ſo that he have the ſkill to make a right uſe of them, and that he knows how to value them. But to ſpeak my Judgment, it is not to be knowing, to have read very much, nor to have learned a great number of different opinions which diſcover nothing certainly. We know nothing well but that which we ſee clearly, and that which we can preſently make others ſee and underſtand, if they are clear-ſighted. We ſhould miſtruſt all that which we perceive but as through a Cloud, and which we cannot make very plain to the ſight of another.

Whilſt

Whilſt people are young, they learn little more than certain words which make a ſhew of Learning, though they are knowing in nothing, and that is not becoming to a man that is abroad in the World. I would have one know all things, and that his manner of diſcourſing might not betray his having ſtudied.

It is a very great advantage to have an inſpection into things, ſaid the Mareſhal, and to know the World, whether it be that we are to ſpeak or write: but that which ſavours too much of Study, is for the moſt part not liked. I know not whether it be well to write as one ſpeaks, and to ſpeak as one writes. Many people have been of opinion that it is, but it ſeems to me, that the uſe is otherwiſe. 'Twere more likely, anſwered the Chevalier, if they had ſaid, that we ſhould write as we deſire to ſpeak, and ſpeak as we deſire to write; for one ſeldom doth either of them as we wiſh we could. This queſtion which is not to be deſpiſed by perſons of wit, may eaſily be cleared.

We write things which are never pronounced, and which are made only to be read, as a Hiſtory, or any ſuch like thing.

When any one undertakes that, and would be ſucceſsful in it, they muſt not write as if they were telling a ſtory in Company: Hiſtory is more noble, and more ſevere; Converſation is more free, and negligent. And as there are ſome things which are only fit to be read, ſo there are others which are made principally to be heard ſpoken, as Harangues. If we would judge of their worth, we muſt conſider to what degree they are good when they are pronounced, ſince that is what they aim at. And becauſe that Letters are not pronounced (for although they are many times read aloud) yet that is not called pronouncing, we ſhould not write them altogether as we ſpeak. As for Example, whoſoever ſhould ſee a perſon, to whom he had juſt been writing a Letter, although it were very excellent, he would not ſay the ſame things to him that he had written, or at the leaſt he would not ſay them in the ſame manner: yet for all that it is good when we write, to imagine in ſome ſort that we are ſpeaking, that we may not put in any thing that is not natural, or which may not be ſpoken in Company: and likewiſe when we ſpeak, to fancy that we are writing,

that

that we may not say any thing that is not noble, and which hath not something of exactness.

How comes it to pass, said the Marshal, that many people are said to speak well, who cannot write well? It is many times believed, answered the Chevalier, that some certain persons speak well in effect, when in truth they only speak well in appearance. That is because either their presence startles, or the sound of their voice surpriseth. When any one excelleth in speaking, they may do the same in writing: it is true, that this latter requires a little more care. Also it seems to me, that one cannot write well, without knowing how to speak well; but it happens, that those who make it their study to write well, have commonly a languishing way of speaking, which is as it were almost spent. Those people mind too much the sound and harmony. This softness of Language which they affect, makes them many times lose by little and little the natural use of it, which consists in giving to every thing that one speaks the motions that we feel in our hearts. For we do not speak only to make our thoughts to be understood, but to express our apprehensions,

prehenſions, which are two very different things.

He who finds himſelf not moved at any thing, is as unfit to ſpeak as he that thinks nothing. The heart hath its Language, as the Wit hath his; and this expreſſion of the heart works many times the greateſt effects. When the heart is not agitated, although one hath very much wit, it touches not ſo ſenſibly; and when one is ſtirred, if the wit fails, they only make a noiſe, and ſo unſeaſonably, that they were better hold their peace. It is neceſſary then for the heart to have apprehenſions, and for the wit, not only to guide, but alſo to make the choice of them. For as there are thoughts which are agreeable, and others which are not, the very ſame diverſity is found in the motions of the heart, ſome of them are well received, and others rejected. You know much better than I, that to inſpire either joy or ſadneſs, and many other paſſions which govern the World (in truth to the prejudice of reaſon) it is not enough to know them by experience, but we muſt be affected with them at the ſame inſtant, at leaſt ſo as we are with thoſe things which are repreſented on the Theatres. Whe-

Whether we design to speak well, or to write well, we must have many considerations in the well doing of it: very few people have succeeded. The most difficult thing, in my Judgment, is to be knowing in that which ought to please, and to have a Genius to put it in practice. I say, in that which ought to please, because it is very difficult to be assured of it. For in matters of agreements every one hath his several relish, and if you take notice of that which commonly pleases, it proceeds not so much from the perfection of it, as from a certain temperature, which agrees with our natural sentiments. It is this proportion which charms us, and it is not perceived from whence it comes; but in my Judgment the true graces, those which affect most, and which are always liked, are never to be without a delicateness, and that great things, as Pomp and Magnificence, are made not so much to please, as to cause admiration. Beauty it self, when it hath so much lustre, is above our strength, we cannot support it. We praise the greatest Beauties, but we love the prettiest. The reason is, because we are tired with long admiring, and whatsoever is made only for

that,

that, displeaseth as soon as the admiration is over.

We must apply our selves to think well, the excellency of thoughts hath so many advantages over other certain Beauties, they hope to find in Arts and Study, that he who thinks the best, is always above others. I find also, that those who have a good discernment in things, have likewise the advantage in the manner of expressing them, and that it is the exquisiteness of the apprehension which makes the Language excellent. All this depends upon acquiring that kind of Wit, which we have been so much speaking of, and that Master who can teach it, may be said to be an excellent Master.

Things of action and memory are very easily learned, and there are people enough to be found, who know how to teach them. But it is not so with that which they call to *Know* and to *Judge*: This is the Masterpiece of the mind, especially as to that which regards skill and invention, the justness and decency of things. There are but few Masters who do not make one take a contrary course, which cannot afterwards easily be altered. And because the first

motions

motions and impressions which are made in the heart of a Child take deepest root, and insensibly disposeth and swayeth him to good or evil for his whole life; I could with that such Books only might be read to the young Prince, as might give him the Idæa, or at least the apprehension of perfection by some most remarkable passages written by a good hand. For sometimes we see things so well hit, that it is impossible either to say or think them better. One makes a great progress when one forms ones self after such models, and by the accustoming ones self, whatsoever one says hath a taste of it.

This Language which few persons know how to speak, proceeds from a justness of wit, and from an extent of understanding, which discovers things as they are. It is a natural discernment, which nevertheless we constantly improve, when we think of it as we ought, and frequent the company of such persons who have it by Nature. But I tell you again, Sir, that those who bemoan themselves for not having studied as commonly people study, have lost but little by it.

It is no inconsiderable thing the being able

able to undeceive ones ſelf in all things, and to know how to ſet a value upon every thing according to its merit: And if any one would diſcover to us, or but only make us ſenſible what we ought to believe of things, we ſhould have a great obligation to that perſon. Moſt people account this nothing; but for all that, it is certain, that without this knowledge we muſt be always either fool'd by our ſelves, or unjuſt to all others.

It ſeems to me, ſaid the Mareſchal, that to be inſtructed how to live, and to inſinuate ſuch opinions as one ought to have, there is nothing more to be feared than an ill Maſter. I do not wonder ſo much, that ſuch as are firſt offered, are taken for us, that is not of ſo much conſequence: But for a great Prince, upon whom the happineſs of the Publick muſt hereafter abſolutely depend, and by whoſe Example ſo many people will endeavour to faſhion themſelves, as being the moſt noble Model, no care in the World ſhould be neglected. If there were a man in the farthеſt part of the *Indies*, who could acquit himſelf therein better than the ableſt amongſt us, I would have him fetched. The buſineſs is to make a great

great King, whom we may love and admire; to make him happy, and likewise to order it so, that all those who live under him may be happy too. For it is but reasonable that those should a little share in his happiness, who are in duty obliged to sacrifice themselves for the procuring of it.

There is nothing requisite, said the Chevalier, but the rendring of him an honest and worthy man, at least that is the most important thing. I see, said the Mareshal, that this word honest man almost comprehends every thing. But if any one should ask me what it is, I should find my self much to seek. I do not wonder at it, said the Chevalier, for a thing of so large an extent, looks too many ways, and hath too many appearances and shadows to be expressed in two or three words. Those who say that honesty consists in living and dying well, only vary the terms, without clearing the question. Besides, if one should not dye, he might notwithstanding by living be an honest man, nay he might by that means make a greater progress therein. To have a more distinct knowledge of it, we may look upon it in it self separated from all other things that are

not

not of it, or foreign to it, and consider it by all sorts of lights.

Tell me what you believe of it, said the Mareshal, I should be glad to see whether we have the same thoughts in a thing of this consequence. I know, said the Chevalier, that you must needs understand it rightly, because you make use of it always as your guide; and if that Idea which I have of it be good, it must without doubt be conformable to yours. For perfect honesty is always the same in what subjects soever it is found, although the difference of Time and Fortune makes it appear very differently. But under whatever form it shews it self, it always pleaseth, and by that it may principally be known; for the true Agreements come not from a simple superficial, or a slight appearance, but from a great stock of Wit or Merit, which mingles and shews it self in all that one says, and in all the actions of ones life.

It seems to me, that it affects not to make a mystery of any thing, that as it avoids all extreams, it endeavours not to hide, nor to shew it self. Its first appearance hath not so much lustre, as either to dazle or to surprise people; but when we come to consider

ſider her, we find that it hath ſo much Grace in every thing that is offered of good or ill, of ſerious or pleaſant, that one would think that all things are alike to it and agreeable. And if there be any parts ſo diſadvantagious, that it would be impoſſible for the Graces themſelves to act them well, it knows well how to refuſe them.

I find that it is not cruel, but willing to excuſe and pardon, and it is ſo far from raiſing it ſelf upon the miſery of another, that it is always ready to help thoſe that are ſo. It makes all thoſe who depend upon it happy, ſo far as Fortune permits; and if it be not in its power to do that, at leaſt it makes no body ſad, it is careful to avoid that even in the ſmalleſt things. If it jeſts ſometimes, its mirth and gayety tends only to the delight even of thoſe whom it makes ſport with. It is never ſo much ſatisfied with it ſelf, but that it is ſenſible that there is ſtill ſomething beyond what it can pretend to. It ſeeks no falſe advantages, but on the contrary, if occaſion offers not it ſelf, we muſt many times gueſs at that which is beſt in it.

Its own intereſt deludes it not, and if it ſo happens, that an honeſt man be accuſed,

sed, although his life be aimed at, he makes not use of all sorts of Arguments and Reasons to defend himself, but that little he says makes every body regret that they offended him. Represent to your self *Socrates*, *Scipio*, or some others of that rank; for I observe that those people are as it were above Fortune, at least they are not transported with prosperity: and what misfortune soever attacqueth them, although they are never heard to say that their vertue doth not forsake them, yet we may find that they have more than enough to support them. I find that honesty always judges well, although it be very cautious in deciding; it prefers Choice before Abundance, and hath more care of being neat and cleanly than richly dress; and values those things that are least in sight more than those that are soon discovered. Do you not take notice likewise, that it hath more regard to Merit than to Fortune? that it is not subject to be prejudiced against any body; that which disorders narrow Souls surpriseth it very little; and the opinion of the World hinders it not from understanding the true value of things?

I believe it depends but little either upon

on time or place; and that he who can attain so far as to be an honest worthy man in his Cottage, would be the same in all the the Courts of the World. But there are many things necessary to the being a worthy honest man. And although some may pass for such at the Courts of great Princes, we must not therefore conclude, that there is nothing wanting in them, unless they can be so every where, and amongst all sorts of people.

Many observations might be made, if any one would enlarge upon this Subject. But to conclude, 'tis observed, that honesty hath this in it, it leaves a kind and tender remembrance always of it self in those who have once known it, and carries it self so, that every body is very glad to have obliged it.

But now after all this, a Lady who was perfectly handsom, and of so pleasing a wit and humour, that even the handsomest Ladies could not chuse but love her, asked me what an honest man was, and an honest Woman; for the expression is proper to both: and when I told her my opinion of it, and that she her self had discoursed very rationally of it, she confessed

that she thought all that which I told her was very necessary for the being that which she had asked. But yet there was something more which was unexplainable, and was better known by practice than by expression, which, as she imagined, consisted in I knew not what of Nobleness, that heightens all the good Qualities, and which proceeds only from the heart and from the mind, the rest is only the Train and Equipage of it.

This Lady, said the Mareshal, was very hard to be pleased; for there was enough before for the making an honest man, and I approve without exception of all that you have observed concerning it, unless it be that which you said of pleasing, and that it was an infallible proof of honesty. It seems to me, that people very often succeed in that, as well by ill ways as by good, nay, and with more choice and splendour. To that, said the Chevalier, one may answer in two words, that there are some persons who understand true Merit, and that it is a good sign when one pleaseth them: But there are many more who judge not well, and for those we have no great cause to rejoyce when we

we are so agreeable to them.

However it be, said the Mareshal, to examine honesty well, whether we consider it in it self, or in those things that it says and that it doth, it still appears to be above every thing else, and there is nothing so worthy of a great Prince. It is true, said the Chevalier, that it is amiable, and that it inspires respect, although it be forced to be silent and unactive; but you have hit upon the two things which give lustre, the speaking and the actions, all depend upon that, and it was that (says *Homer*) which the Learned *Chiron* taught to young *Achilles*.

That Master, said the Mareshal, without doubt had great skill, he made a Scholar that the World hath talked of; and if that we see so few of so high and extraordinary a Worth, it must needs be the fault of the Governors. As he ended these words, he saw Gamesters come in, who came to divert him, and that put an end to the Conversation.

THE SIXTH CONVERSATION.

THE Chevalier came to the Mareſhals houſe, who had paſſed the Afternoon at play. He came juſt as the Game was ended, and the Gameſters were retiring. The Mareſhal, who had a mind to go abroad, was glad to ſee him come ſo opportunely to have him with him. I will not aſk you, ſaid he, whether you are for walking; for I know very well you love to look upon the different colours which are in the Sky, when the Sun ſets, and that it is a pleaſure to you to breathe the freſh Air in the Evening. I am only in doubt of which ſide we ſhould go. That Wood where we were the other day would pleaſe me much; but we muſt croſs the Town to go to it, and the way is very rough. I doubt beſides, whether we ſhall have time enough. I ſuppoſe, ſaid the Chevalier, that it will be beſt to go the lower

lower way along by the Water-side: which advice was followed, and they went on that side as far as to the end of the Meadow, where they stopt (because they could not go further with the Coach) and alighted to walk by the River side.

The Marshal loved not to be long silent, and it happened luckily for him, and for those who frequent him, who were always glad to hear him. He had been so imployed at play, that he had scarce said any thing all the day. He began at the first to speak of some things which he had most a mind to, and after some discourse upon that Subject: We must not, said he, look upon Kings with the same eyes as we do upon private persons, the most part whereof have little other aim than to live contentedly and at ease, though a man of ability doth always study most how to purchase love and esteem.

I know very well what false glory is (a worthy honest man regards it not, and the wisest despise it) but it seems to me, that the more Courage and Wit a man hath, the more he loves true Honour: and if there where any one who could not acquire that, although he hath all other

things to be wished, he would nevertheless be much to be pitied, at least if he were of a generous noble Nature; and if you observe it, people are less willing to pardon those injuries, which touch upon their Honour than any other. And when they find themselves touched on that side, they think they cannot enough resent it. Also to say the truth, that which makes people so much desire great Imployments and high Commands, is not for the conveniencies of life; for our lives are made by them the more troublesom, but it is the hopes of having an opportunity to make it appear, that they have Merit in them.

But this nevertheless for a private person cannot extend it self far, nor be but of short continuance. But Kings are looked upon by all the Earth, and Posterity which never flatters any body, will be Judge of their Merit. Glory is their greatest and their chiefest Interest. All the Heroes and all the great Men have devoted and given themselves up to it. One had need be able, faithful, and zealous to give them good counsel, in this particular, and principally they ought well to understand in what true Glory consists, and by what

means

means it may be acquired.

It is ſaid, that *Parmenio* (that great Captain, whoſe only aim was to vanquiſh) counſelled his Maſter to ſurprize the Enemy, becauſe of their great number, and to aſſault them by the favour of the night. But this Prince (who made it not ſo much his aim to gain the Battel, as to make his Valour be admired) would fight them in the day time, being reſolved to loſe all, both his Life and Fortune, rather than to run the hazard of having cauſe to bluſh at his Victory. The ſame man counſelled him alſo to divide *Aſia* with the *Perſians*, and to receive great Treaſures, which they propoſed to him. This advice he received no better than the other; he had a heart too Imperious to ſuffer any one to be equal with him, and too high to love Gold and Riches. His deſire tended only to glory, and if he did not always know what was the beſt and moſt ſolid, it was becauſe he was very young, and that he ſaw himſelf at the top of Fortune. Beſides, he graſped at ſo many things, that he could not well have a due regard to every thing that he undertook, and he was alſo eaſily tranſported.

The ſmalleſt errours that Princes commit, are ſometimes of great conſequence to their reputation; and I ſhould adviſe them (if they would truſt my Judgment) to conſider often in what manner the greateſt Men would carry themſelves, if they had their parts to act.

It is no ill way to adviſe a Prince to do that which is moſt honeſt, and likewiſe moſt heroick. We have ſeen already, that it is that which befits him beſt; and if we look further into things concerning this World, we ſtill find in all manner of reſpects, that this at laſt is the beſt. Both Heaven and Fortune ſeem to have a particular care of theſe great hearts who are negligent and reſign up themſelves. The braveſt for the moſt part prevail, and an high reſolution hath been the ſaving of many more people than it hath loſt. The more this Prince, whom I was ſpeaking of, ſought after death, the further it was from him; and if he were wounded (as it is almoſt impoſſible for any one to throw himſelf continually into danger, and never to be ſo) it was at leaſt without being ever killed or overcome.

However it is not to be wiſhed, that a Prince

Prince ſhould hazard himſelf ſo much, or that he ſhould only know that way to glory; for (beſides that it would put us in continual Alarms for ſo precious a life) it appears to me below a great Prince, to expoſe himſelf on all occaſions: and if you well conſider it, it is not that which moſt ſhews the greatneſs of ones Soul, and the contempt of death. I think it much better to march towards death with a ſteddy pace, like *Socrates*, than to precipitate ones ſelf upon it, like *Alexander*; for this is to effect a very difficult thing very eaſily, which ſhews a heart to be more firm and reſolute.

There are ſome Soveraigns, who we can look on only but as wiſe Politicians, and that in my mind is not the beſt form that they might appear in. Something which I cannot expreſs, of more noble, would give them a greater ſplendour, and can you think any thing more worthy of a great Prince than Love and Arms? They are the Subject of the fineſt Romances, anſwered the Chevalier, and when a Reign is at an end without either Love or Arms, a Hiſtory has but a few things to ſay. But ſome Princes are not born to act both parts,

and

and it is always enough for a Soveraign to govern his States well, and to render his Subjects happy.

I have known some Princes, said the Marshal, who would have been very gallant men, if there had been care taken at the first, to have put them into the right way, and to have shewed them what was to be done. This first point of Education is of much greater importance to them than private persons; for when they are no longer under the Conduct of a Governour, all that they do is approved on, or at least it is so in appearance, and no body comes into their presence, but with a design to please them, because although one loves them, yet one easily inclines to love their favour more: And in truth it would be great imprudence for any one to hazard the drawing the hatred of his Prince upon himself, and to go about to advise him as he would one of his particular Friends, unless he had first signified his pleasure to have it so. However those persons who are near about him, if they are not too much swayed by Interest, may very secretly tell him in an agreeable manner, all that which may contribute to his Glory and to

his

his Happiness. It is an easie matter, said the Chevalier, to give them good advice as to their glory. It is agreed what that is, and how it may be acquired; all those who know how to judge will concur. But it is not so as to ones happiness, which depends more upon the temper than upon those things which people believe give it. And to say the truth, whosoever undertakes to ascertain a Prince what will make him happy, must know him very perfectly. Many times we our selves know not what would be best for our own happiness.

You speak reason, said the Mareshal, but when all things that can be wished present themselves, and that there is nothing wanting but to chuse well, it seems to me, that with a very little help, it were no difficult thing to be happy. And to say the truth, he is in a fair way to it, who sees himself one of the first among the Masters of the World. Fortune hath nothing greater to give. Let us consider what pleasure it is to do good: There is nothing in my mind more noble, and this delight seems to me to be made only for great Princes; the more favour they bestow, the more they are in a condition to grant: For it is certain,

tain, that their gifts, which are accompanied with choice and eſteem, ſupport their Grandeur, and render them the more powerful. It is not riches that are principally to be deſired from Kings (for their Treaſuries might be exhauſted by profuſeneſs) but it is Imployments and Truſts, theſe are the opportunities, by which men make it appear what they are; and when thoſe perſons who have Worth, are put into Imployments ſuitable to themſelves, they make themſelves known, and their Princes are well ſerved.

That which commonly they want, and which we have abundantly, is the pleaſures which you know we have in converſing freely with thoſe we love, and the being in a condition to diſpute of certain advantages, in which neither Fortune nor Greatneſs have any part. The price of Merit, which touches ſo much many brave hearts, at length becomes inſenſible to them, becauſe people praiſe indifferently all that they do alike, without regarding either meaſure or decency. One muſt be complacent, as becomes a gallant man, to make his life agreeable; and I cannot conceive that thoſe Princes of the *Levant*, who live only

only amongſt Slaves, can be happy. They have all things, and perfectly enjoy nothing; they have the faireſt Women in the World, but they are Captives, always in priſon, without wit or love: they have nothing of that which is moſt taking, nothing of freedom, nothing that is pleaſant and delightful.

The Commerce of Love and the diverſities of gallant Adventures, which make one delight in the Courts of the World, and to endeavour to render ones ſelf an accompliſht man, all this is unknown to them. They are only ſavage Events which they delight in. I am thinking of that which you ſaid juſt now; there are always in thoſe Countries ſome Adventures of Love and of War, but they are ſuch, that I defie *Arioſto*, *Taſſo*, and even *Sapho*, to make a pleaſant Romance of them. If living ſo be happineſs, that felicity ſeems to me very barbarous, and I cannot believe, that any man of good ſenſe can envy it. The greateſt pleaſures, if people know not how to manage them, and that there be not wit intermixt with them, or ſome ſenſe of Honour, laſt not long, and that may be ſome comfort to thoſe who have not all that they deſire.

I look upon it, that these Princes debase rather than exalt themselves, in affecting such a Grandeur, which no body hath any thoughts of disputing with them. I think that Civility and Majesty both together, which makes people find with pleasure, that such Princes are their Masters, is much better; the more they condescend, the more one is ready to submit, especially those that are well bred persons, who never presume too much.

I think that the most eminent men were wont to communicate freely with their Friends, and that they were very familiar, at least *Cæsar* was so, said the Chevalier, even with his Souldiers, so far as he took delight, to remember in any of their remarkable sayings, this familiarity. Which to say the truth, accompanied with other kindnesses, had charmed them so, that when they were to fight for his Glory, they thought nothing difficult to them, and were not apprehensive either of peril or death. If by chance they were made Prisoners, and had their lives offered them, they refused it, and said, that it belonged to the Souldiers of *Cæsar* to give, not to take Quarter.

I wonder not then at all, ſaid the Mareſhal, that ſuch a man followed by ſuch people, although the ſmaller number did always conquer: That which I ſaid, that Heaven takes theſe great hearts into its protection, it appears alſo in this Hero, who amidſt all thoſe Combates, in which he was very active, received not the leaſt hurt.

Princes of great Deſigns and high Enterpriſes, ſaid the Chevalier, are always beloved; although Fortune, which we know is inconſtant, leaves their ſide, yet Glory & Honour never forſake them. *Cæſar* was of this number, he had nothing in him which was not noble, and which favoured not of Grandeur. He was ſo brave, and ſo full of curteſie both together, that he would have hazarded his perſon to have ſaved the meaneſt of his Souldiers. He loved all thoſe that followed his Fortune. He ſhared with them the glory, as he did the danger. And it was without doubt the ſureſt way to gain, as he did, fifty Battels, without loſing one, firſt to gain their love and eſteem.

A few days before that great fight, wherein the *Almans* and the people of the

North

North were defeated, he had ſent Ambaſſadours to their Prince *Arioviſtus*, who contrary to the Law of Nations detained them, and put them in Chains. *Ceſar* ſaid that he was not more glad of gaining the Victory, than he was to embrace them, and knock off their Fetters. But this that I am about to tell you, ſhews much of his nature, and to what degree he was beloved.

Curio, who was one of his Generals, was making War in another corner of the World. He was a young Man of a great Courage, but of little Experience, and had to deal with the *Africans*, who were grown old in the Trade. This young Man being fallen into an Ambuſcade, and finding it was in his power to ſave himſelf; but that he had not had prudence or good fortune enough to ſecure the Troops which *Ceſar* had committed to his truſt, he choſe rather to dye than to preſent himſelf before him. Every word that *Ceſar* ſaid of his Friend, ſeemed to be accompanied with ſighs and tears. Neither was it the fear of an ill reception or uſage, which made *Curio* take ſo deſperate a courſe; but it was a certain apprehenſion which makes us fear the

the sight of our Friends, when they are of so high a Merit, and that we are sensible they have no reason to approve of our actions.

We are apt to lessen peoples Merit, according as we love or hate the persons (said the Mareshal) and *Cæsar* understood very well how to make himself be loved. I remember the Borders of *Lignon*, where I delighted my self so much when I was young, and the answer of the Oracle,

Ut amerie, ama.

This is a very sute way, at least if it be performed handsomly. For it is not enough to devote ones self to gain people: the principal Secret consists in managing it so, that the person whom one loves, should be glad of it. The manner of doing it, which seems not to be so considerable, imports more than all the rest, and I see that the craftiest are taken with it as well as the simplest; but I hardly remember where I left off.

You need not take much care for that, said the Chevalier, for you never leave a Subject, but those who have heard you are very well satisfied with that which you have said. Besides, a little of negligence is very convenient, (could one live easie with people who are so very exact and regular) but I think you were speaking of *Cæsar*, and I was thinking, I remember, that the most eloquent man of those times told him one day, that he had done more than conquered his Enemies, for he had vanquished Victory her self. And that he had set himself above her, in pardoning all those who had a mind to ruine him. This commendation which was so justly due to him, gives me a great Idæa of him; but there is one thing of him, which angers me much, that is, his calling of us *Barbarians*. I am not the only person that suffers this injury with impatience: it hath so dissatisfied one of our Romance-makers, that without any difficulty, he writ that *Cæsar* was no

no Courtier. Upon my faith I am glad of it, said the Mareſhal, and it was but what he deſerved; for what made him uſe our Anceſtors ſo ill?

However, ſaid the Chevalier, this reproach which hath made you laugh, is not ſo ill grounded, that it may not be maintained, and without examining what it is to be a Chevalier in that manner that we underſtand it. People are always more ſo at the Court of a Prince, than in a Republick. Alſo it ſeems to me, that the Manners of Cities, and their ways of doing things are not noble; you know that the great World cannot ſuffer them. That which ſavours of the Country-ſavageneſs may be noble, although far different from the Nobleneſs of Courts. That is becauſe there is to be diſcerned I know not what of Worth and Greatneſs, plain and without Art. Imagine to your ſelf thoſe thick dark Foreſts of *Africa*, the infinite number of Lyons, and many other wild Beaſts, all this appears to me

more noble than the Gardens of the Grand Signor.

That which you were saying but now interrupted the Marshal, makes me call to mind, that it is not enough when one speaks, or when one takes a Journey, to know to what place one would go, nor to take the right way to it; but one must think how to make the Journey as pleasant and easie to us as we can.

To return to *Cæsar*, people held that he was the greatest Man in the World, and I believe, if we consider him every way, there is reason for it, as well for the Wonders of his Life and Fortune, as for the Greatness of his Wit and Vertue. Is it not he who so long time since gave the example and invention of all those extraordinary things, that are at this day practised in War? Might we not be able to know yet little better what kind of man he was; for they speak differently of him.

It is very difficult, answered the Chevalier, to judge rightly of those whom

whom we have not seen, and who have lived in an Age so remote. But if it were possible to discover and unfold a man so far back, and truly examine him, certainly it must be *Cæsar*. He hath done so many things, and his life (though full of variety) is so equal, that there is seen some correspondence in all his actions, and likewise the causes of it may easily be discovered. It may also be said, that crafty people had observed him, who talked very boldly and freely of him to one another. One of the clearest sighted men of those times (but one perhaps also, who was unreasonably fond of the Laws of his Town and Country) said, that never any man better understood Justice, nor had been more unjust than *Cæsar*. This shews on the one side, that he had a good discernment of things, but as to the rest, he slighted those common Vertues.

That which makes me know so much of his Spirit, and his Actions, is the Writings which he hath left (at least

if it be his own) for there is a very Learned man who would perſwade me, that it was not his. Whoſe then, ſaid the Mareſhal? Of a certain, I know not who, anſwered the Chevalier. I believe for all that, it had been more eaſie for this certain I know not, who to have conquered and rendred himſelf Maſter, than to have written in that noble Style. You know that in matter of Conqueſt, happy Conjunctions may help very much: 'twas neceſſary to be *Cæſar* to expreſs ones ſelf in that manner, and chance hath nothing to do in it. His Merit and his Greatneſs is ſeen in the ſmalleſt things that he ſays, not that he ſpeaks in *Pompeys* words, on the contrary. His way is plain, without Ornament; but hath in it a pureneſs and nobleneſs, not eaſily expreſſed, which proceeds from a good Education, and from the height of his Genius.

Theſe Maſters of the World who are, as it were above Fortune, look with indifferency upon the moſt of thoſe things, which we admire, and

becauſe

becauſe they are but little affected with them, they ſpeak but ſlightly of them. In a place where he was relating how two or three of his Legions were for ſome time in diſorder, fighting againſt thoſe of *Pompey*; *People believed*, ſaid he, *that there would have been an end of* Cæſar, *if* Pompey *had known how to overcome, that Victory had decided the* Roman *Empire.* You ſee in how few and plain words he expreſſes a thing of ſo great conſequence.

Cæſar was born with too violent paſſions, Glory and Love, which carried him away like two Torrents. Thoſe infinite numbers of Deſigns which he had laid from his infancy even to the end of his life, (for he was of a very active Spirit) tended only to them. Not but that he had other ſentiments, which you know make people deſire the ſociety of men, and take delight in their Company. For to be an accompliſht man, as *Cæſar* was, one muſt take part in all things that may render ones life

happy. But these two passions transported him, he was not very sensibly touched or concerned at any thing, but only so far as it might be of advantage for his main Designs, the ends before-mentioned; and although he had been so famous in the Wars, he loved it not so much for it self, as that he might thereby seat himself above all.

He was liberal and acknowledging, fierce, but not revengeful, and as to that great injustice, which people blame him for, and lay as a stain upon so fair a life, it may be said in two words, that he who was of all the *Romans* fittest to govern, had a mind alone to do that well which so many others did ill.

He was tall, of a reasonable shape, handsom, of a good Meen, dexterous in all Exercises of Arms, and a good Horse-man. He had a fair Complexion, and smooth, black Eyes, quick and cunning. He had a strong and piercing Voice, and a great Grace in speaking. He was of a delicate Com-

plexion,

plexion, as the most part of those are who are of that kind of Wit and Temper. It is said, that he gained health by neglecting it; and that he used so much Exercise, that he rendred himself by it indefatigable.

He had Mistresses in all parts where he came, at *Rome*, in *Spain*, in *Greece*, and amongst the *Gauls*. He was as it were enchanted in *Egypt*; for what was it he undertook not for the Princess of that Country? And further up in *Africa*, was he not again in Love with a Black-a-more Queen? His aim was at Ladies of the highest Quality: I know not whether it were because that the Behaviour of men added more grace to their natural Beauty, or that a sense of Glory joyned with Love, made him look upon Ladies as a kind of Conquest. He affected a little, perhaps, too much to be talked of; but I do not pretend to represent him as a man without failings; for who is it that can boast himself to be without any? but I speak of him as an admirable Conqueror, and of immense natural parts.

In

In the most hazardous and hottest Actions of the Wars, he alone was the joy and hopes of his Army. They all believed him so able and so resolute, that they despaired of nothing under his Conduct; and with that he had a certain gayety, which sparkled in his eyes, and on his face, which animated them on all occasions. And if they were at any time in doubt concerning the event of things, it was only their care for him; for few cared for surviving him themselves.

He loved fine Cloaths, and his rich Dress made him always to be known, and principally on a day of Battel. He would have his Souldiers to be neatly attired, and always ready: and in my mind it is a great sign that those sort of people have honours in them, when they love to have a good Equipage, and to be very curious and neat in their Arms. He regarded not whether his men were of great stature or no. That, said the Marshal, depends upon fancy: there are many who are not very promising, yet who make themselves to be

taken

taken notice of enough. This great man was never mistaken in any thing; and I admire that he was a Prodigy both in Wit and Valour.

I should not be surprised at an extraordinary Valour in a Brute; all persons who know neither pleasure nor pain, and who are not sensible what it is to be dead or alive. But for a man of so sensible a temper, and so delicate, and of so subtil and high Understanding, that it is in truth which seems rare to me. It is indeed, said the Chevalier; but for all that we must only wonder at the greatness of his Wit. For although one may find ones self very sensible of pain, and cannot make it easie to our selves to dye, yet when one hath a courage firm and resolute to a certain degree, and that is no hard matter to have, one may be as brave as one hath a mind to be; one may manage ones life or abandon it as one judges best, and as occasion requires. There needs but an ordinary firmness to make one resolve indifferently either way,

and

and *Cæsar* had always Glory before him, which made him chuse that which was most becoming a Hero. I had not considered nor examined him in this way, said the Mareshal, and I believe that you are in the right.

They were till night by the River side, sometimes sitting, sometimes walking; and always discoursing of many things; but Historians never relate all.

FINIS.